

BASED ON THE MOTION PICTURE STARRING
SHIRLEY MACLAINE AND BARBARA HERSHEY



Anne of Green Gables
A New Beginning



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A New Beginning Screenplay

Adapted By: Kevin Sullivan

A screenplay based in part on ‘*Anne of Green Gables ~A New Beginning*’

SMASHWORDS EDITION

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FADE IN:

EXT. A FIELD, NEW BRUNSWICK -- AFTERNOON1

A voice calls into the wind blowing across a vast field of daisies at the edge of a pond. Children leave a schoolhouse. The camera pans down to reveal 10 year old ANNE SHIRLEY reading under a willow and hidden amongst the tall flowers. A young teacher, BERTHA SHIRLEY, with the fiery-red hair of a pre-Raphaelite, calls anxiously for her daughter.

BERTHA

Anne! Anne! Anne Shirley!

YOUNG ANNE blinks, trying to tear herself out of her literary daydream.

EXT. WHITE SANDS BEACH -- AFTERNOON2

A 57 year old ANNE is nestled under a blanket, in a chaise, on the beach next to the old Hotel. Lulled by the soft ocean waves she tries to wake herself, but the daydream is too delicious. A voice calls to her from the sand dunes. GENE ARMSTRONG, an athletic 50 year old, strides through the tall grass in khakis. He finds Anne sequestered in the tall grass.

EXT. A FIELD, NEW BRUNSWICK -- AFTERNOON3

Bertha lifts up Young Anne, kisses her, and takes her by the hand and they run across the hill through the tall flowers.

BERTHA

Anne, you've been out here since lunch! You never remember to tell me where you're going and you missed our entire history class. The Fall of Rome!

Young Anne looks disappointed. Bertha looks at the watch on her blouse.

YOUNG ANNE

It's one of the privileges of having a mother as a schoolteacher. What a relief to be rescued! The book is a perfect tragedy.

BERTHA

It'll be a tragedy indeed if I miss my train! Your father's home from the logging camp, remember?

Young Anne's head is still in her book.

BERTHA (CONT'D)

We have to go!

Young Anne chatters away as she struggles to keep up.

YOUNG ANNE

My but that book gave me a thrill. It's the story about a daughter of a belted Earl - stolen away from her parents in infancy by a cruel nurse, who died before she can confess.

Young Anne keeps talking to herself, behind her mother. Her hand slips from Bertha's. Bertha dissolves away in the tall grass.

YOUNG ANNE (CONT'D)

There's nothing lovelier than to have a mother to gather me up...

Young Anne stops. Bertha is nowhere to be seen. Anne runs. Anne murmurs to herself. She is jolted awake.

BERTHA

C'mon Anne.

YOUNG ANNE

Mother?! Mother..!

EXT. WHITE SANDS BEACH / AVONLEA -- AFTERNOON⁴

ANNE

Where are you?

Gene picks up the copy of her play scribbled with her notes, that is lying beside a June 1945 newspaper lying in the sand whose headline reads: "Allies Divide Europe". He flips the pages.

GENE

Hi.

ANNE

Hi.

GENE

I figured you were out here writing. There's a read-through with the cast. I had some notes they wanted to share with you before we get started.

Gene puts his arm around her as Anne pulls the blanket up. He puts the play away in his bag.

ANNE

I'm a novelist, I'm not used to notes from all these people. Could you go and just fill me in?

4CONTINUED:4

Gene extends his hand to help her up. Anne senses something by the look on his face.

GENE

We'll just tell the cast that you're gonna hold off on it for now. I mean it's not a disaster. You obviously have a different concept.

Anne shrinks down. The wind is knocked out of her sails.

GENE (CONT'D)

It's not stageworthy Anne. Not yet anyway. My concern is that I don't think it's going to be ready to perform this summer. I could put in another play and they'll just keep working on it. Ah...um... this came for you.

Anne closes her eyes. Gene gives her a reassuring squeeze.

He removes a letter from his back pocket and passes it over to Anne. The name "Dominic Blythe" and address are stamped with "Renvoyez a l'origine". Anne is disturbed. She puts it in her bag and nods, without looking at it.

GENE (CONT'D)

The boys are all off celebrating. This is a huge victory. You'll hear from 'em. Don't worry. See ya later.

ANNE

Thanks.

INT. WHITE SANDS HOTEL -- AFTERNOON5

Gene is rehearsing a group of ACTORS in the Hotel ballroom. Anne is in a phone-booth on a landing outside. The calendar behind her reads June 1945; a poster "The Straw Hat Ensemble - 4 Exciting New Plays through July and August at the White Sands Theatre". Anne has a lump in her throat.

ANNE

I know I sound like a typical mother, but you know what your brother could be like.

Frankly I'm terrified Frannie. Dominic said he'd be on the first boat back from England. I know, I know... I'm sorry to bother you just now. Is the baby better? Don't be silly...you come all the way here when Timmy has the mumps?

ANNE (CONT'D)

I just need someone to talk to. Why wouldn't Dominic get in touch with me? (she stifles herself) No, I hear the baby crying. You better go. Alright, give him a big kiss for me. I love you...ok, bye.

Anne hangs up the phone. She leans her head on the phone.

EXT. BARRY'S POND -- EVENING6

Anne walks the bridge that she and Gilbert Blythe courted on. She pauses, feeling isolated. She gazes into the sun setting across the estuary. Mist drifts over the river.

EXT. CEMETERY -- EVENING7

The shadows grow long among the tilting headstones. Anne stops at a new upright stone. She encounters it earnestly, then kneels on the ground. She proceeds to lie on the grassy mound. An inscription is revealed: "Doctor Gilbert John Blythe 1890-1942. Killed in action at Dieppe, France. Gratefully remembered by his community for defending the faith and his country. Cherished for eternity by his beloved wife, Anne"

ANNE

(whispering)

It isn't right to cry...I never expected this life Gil. Send Dominic home. Get him back to me. Maybe he's alright and just doesn't want to get in touch with me. You can't let go of the people who raise you. Though never knowing who your real parents are can always haunt you.

Getting up, Anne's face is stained with tears and smudged with red soil.

EXT. WHITE SANDS BEACH -- NIGHT8

A fire burns. Anne and Gene sit on the beach; a couple of the Actors finish hamming up a version of Noel Coward's song "A Fine Romance". Gene claps. Anne tries to.

GENE

Well done!

ANNE

Bravo!

GENE

Well done everybody. Time to pack it in...before I decide to recast.
Thanks for coming out.

CONTINUED:8

A FEMALE ACTOR gives Anne a hug.

FEMALE ACTOR

Good night, Anne. Sorry about all the changes to the play.

Anne shakes her head and kisses her back The two MALE ACTORS
saunter off ahead like collegians, singing and horsing around.

GENE

Ten o'clock tomorrow morning. Learn your lines. Any word yet on
Dominic yet? Come on, Anne. He'll be back. Dominic's a big boy. So, you
going to start the re-write and make me a big-time producer or what?

Anne shakes her head.

ANNE

Oh, great American impresario is about as far away from Broadway as
he can get!

GENE (CONT'D)

You know, I don't get it. What are you doing here? You called me and
you say you had a great idea for a play, that you want to challenge
yourself. What did you come here for? What did you come here for?

Anne stands with her arms folded.

ANNE

(blurting out)

I came here to sell Green Gables!

Doing a play with you was an excuse to get here.

Gene folds his arms, in imitation of her. She crossly unfolds her arms .

GENE

Don't waste my time.

Anne suddenly crumbles.

ANNE

Just go away. Just leave me alone!

Gene gets up and walks into the Hotel. Music is playing. People are dancing in silhouette. Anne is in close up in the dark, frightened and without a solution.

ANNE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I've always needed to write. I've made up stories about myself all my life. Used to pretend my parents were a perfect couple, living in harmony.

EXT. A COTTAGE -- DAY9

A tiny yellow house with lilacs around the windows. Muslin curtains blow, revealing an orderly parlor. Young Anne walks hand in hand through the storybook gate with her father WALTER and mother Bertha. The breeze that blows the flowers in the tall English garden is surreal.

ANNE (V.O.)

I did it so often and for so long, it's hard to know what the truth is anymore.

EXT. ROUGH ROAD, NEW BRUNSWICK -- NIGHT10

Walter drives a team in a roaring buggy, along the road to town through the fog.

WALTER

Bertha, I promised you I was gonna quit the logging camp. You can build your own homes instead of living in a boarding house.

BERTHA

Walter Shirley you're an intoxicated braggart. You are going to kill both of us with this crazy nag!

WALTER

This horse can do the mail run from
Grand Falls to St. John in 12 hours.

There's a pretty penny to be made if
I get the contract!! Woah!

The buggy swerves on a corner and is unable to cross a narrow bridge at the edge of town. Missing the bridge the mare tumbles down the embankment upending the buggy into the river. Walter frantically drags Bertha from the rapid current.

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR -- DAY11

Bertha is laid out in a pine coffin. Anne is helped up to kiss her mother goodbye by MRS. LOUISA THOMAS. Louisa removes a locket from her good friend Bertha and passes it to Young Anne. A small group of friends and community members gather. The coffin is closed. Walter disappears out the door, taking a furtive swig from a flask of whiskey hidden in his pocket. DOCTOR THOMAS speaks to the group. Louisa looks daggers at her husband.

CONTINUED:11

LOUISA

Your mother was my best friend. She'd want you to have this. She'd want me to look after you.

REV. JONES

Since Dr. and Mrs. Thomas were so close to Bertha. Walter Shirley and I have asked Dr. Thomas to give a few words of eulogy for this dear women.

DR. THOMAS

Walter Shirley was not at fault. He loved his wife. Our school teacher and friend Bertha has been stolen from our community in an accident of Biblical proportions. But the white majesty of death now falls on this beloved woman and sets her apart to be crowned and to live for ever in God's heavenly kingdom.

EXT. NEW BRUNSWICK CEMETERY-- DAY12

Young Anne is led in a procession to the grave site by an irate Louisa. DR. Thomas is nowhere to be seen. Bewildered and frightened Young Anne prattles on, to offset her anxiety.

REV. JONES

I'm sorry for your loss. Be strong child.

LOUISA

Thank you.

YOUNG ANNE

If Mama's been crowned a queen... then what am I?

LOUISA

A child of God sweetheart.

YOUNG ANNE

Wouldn't it be better to tell people from now on that I was the daughter of a Queen, than to endure the notoriety of such tragedy?

Louisa stifles a sob.

LOUISA

It's better to speak the truth. Your mother may have had noble dreams but she died of pneumonia with dignity, bless her soul. No thanks to your father. I hope my husband can find him and bring him back.

Louisa shakes her head. Noticing the frowns and whispers from the other mourners.

EXT. NEW BRUNSWICK ROADHOUSE -- NIGHT13

Rev. Thomas and Walter stumble down the stairs of a common tavern on the edge of town. Walter is sobbing. Rev. Thomas tries to buoy him up.

DR. THOMAS

Don't be hard on yourself, Walt. The

Almighty thinks better of each one of us, right. Hey, what's that saying? To err is human... and to forgive is divine.

Walter shakes his head. An audience of onlookers has gathered on the verandah of the Roadhouse for his public performance of remorse. He stumbles over to the infamous bridge with broken railings.

WALTER

No, no Doc! I killed her.

DR. THOMAS

Woah! Woah! Stop it! Stop it!

Walter plunges into the raging river. Dr. Thomas stumbles down the embankment to save him, grabbing him in the water.

DR. THOMAS

Walter! I'm coming!

INT. DR. THOMAS HOME-- NIGHT14

Young Anne peers through the floor grill into the kitchen. Dr. Thomas clangs and staggers through the door.

DR. THOMAS

No, you're not listening Louisa. We went back to the river. He wanted to drown his sorrows. Literally!

LOUISA

And you pushed him?!

DR. THOMAS

I rescued him. You know what? I'll say it was a noble performance for the entire town to see, but he's taken off. We may never see the likes of

Walter again.

CONTINUED:14

LOUISA

Do you any idea how mortifying it is to be at the funeral of a dear friend, while the town's esteemed doctor is off on a bender? The whole town knows what the disgusting pair of you were up to!

DR. THOMAS

'Twas barely a drop. Hey, Walter desperately needed my support to absolve himself in front of the town.

That's all it was.

LOUISA

Temperance will be preached in this house.

Walter needed a good kick in the pants. And so do you!

Louisa proceeds to open cupboard after cupboard to pour out bottles of spirits into the sink.

DR. THOMAS

Hey Lousia. Hey, come on now. Stop it.

Young Anne turns to a mirror, talking to her reflection. 14 year old VIOLETTA THOMAS, watches on with a cynical curiosity, her two brothers JOCK and KEITH asleep in their beds.

YOUNG ANNE

Katie...I'm convinced I must have been a disappointment to my father if he's not coming back. Mother said he was a free spirit. I made up my mind I could be a free spirit myself.

(Anne looks up)

I resolve that the 'Thomas' will be my new family and that my life does not have to be a graveyard of buried hopes.

Young Anne stares at the locket of her parents on their wedding day.

INT. WHITE SANDS HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT15

ANNE (V.O.)

The only thing I recall was how my Mother was drawn to him like a moth to a flame...

Anne is lying in the darkness. She gets up looking for a teapot. She finds it and exits the room.

INT. WHITE SANDS HOTEL HALLWAY -- NIGHT16

Gene sitting dozing, reading a magazine in a wing chair in the lobby hallway below, before a smoldering fire.

ANNE

Gene?

Gene continues reading.

ANNE (CONT'D)

I don't want you feel pressured to produce my play.

GENE

Good. I feel pressure to make money this summer.

ANNE

What do you think of if I went to Green Gables?

GENE

That's a great idea. It'd do us both the world of good.

Gene pulls the blanket up around him, takes a swig of scotch and snoozes by the fire. Anne gazes into the flames.

INT. GREEN GABLES, MARILLA'S BEDROOM -- MORNING17

ELSIE and JOHN BARRY are loading boxes into the hallway from the upstairs bedrooms. Elsie is packing photos. The last is a picture of Anne and her close friend DIANA at Diana's wedding. A Mason jar full of pennies falls on the floor.

JOHN

Come on Elsie!! I promised Anne we'd be ready by ten. You know what a pistol she is.

Some of the pennies slip in between the cracks in the floor boards. Elsie gathers them up. She opens the closet door.

ELSIE

You can't clean out 30 years of living in an old place like this in a couple of days. Look how young mom and dad looked when we first moved here. I'm furious at them for letting the place get run down, when Anne was so generous for letting us live here for years - when we had nowhere else.

She is trying to get at the pennies in between the grooves when a plank lifts up mysteriously. Then another...

CONTINUED:17

JOHN (O.S.)

Don't preach to Mom. She thinks the place is an albatross. Why Anne's own kids haven't taken an interest in it is plain weird?

ELSIE

Too far to come.

JOHN (O.S.)

...and it's just easier for our family to fix everything!!

Elsie peers into a little cubby hole in the floor. There are letters all tied together in twine. Elsie reaches in.

EXT. GREEN GABLES, FIELDS -- MORNING18

Anne walks the windswept Island fields and discovers her cherished Green Gables farmhouse nestled in the valley beyond. She pauses, then hurries through the tall grass; walking quickly at first, then sprinting.

EXT. GREEN GABLES -- MORNING19

Anne pauses at the gate, her face full of emotion. The old homestead is weather-beaten, encroached upon by the apple orchard and overgrown vegetation. A truck is parked outside piled high with boxes, suitcases and furniture.

INT. GREEN GABLES -- MORNING20

Anne enters the vestibule. The walls are water-stained and yellowed again. Boxes are piled everywhere.

ANNE

Elsie...John. It's Anne...

JOHN (O.S.)

Auntie Anne! Come on up!

Anne climbs the stairs.

INT. GREEN GABLES, MARILLA'S BEDROOM -- MORNING21

Anne enters Marilla's room at the top of the stairs. Elsie and John look rather stunned kneeling in the closet sorting through letters. John gets up as Anne enters.

ANNE

What mischief are the two of you up to... in Marilla's room?

John throws his arms around Anne.

JOHN

Terrific to see you.

CONTINUED:21

Anne sees the stack of letters.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Your mother's finally written has she? I was wondering if she'd lost every letter I'd written her in the last two months.

Elsie gives Anne a kiss. Anne hugs her dearly.

ELSIE

I know. She's been awful at responding to everybody. She's taken up golf! We were just finishing packing up... or so we thought . . . and we found all these letters in the closet in the floor.

Anne flips through the letters.

ANNE

These are old love letters between Marilla and John Blythe. They quarreled you know. And she was always sorry she didn't forgiven him when she had the chance.

(shaking her head)

What a great, well-kept secret!

Elsie then passes a different letter to Anne. It is addressed: "Anne Shirley, kindness of Miss Nellie Parkhurst, Green Gables Farm, R.R. #3 Bright River, P.E. Island". Anne stares at it turns it over. The reverse is labelled: "Walter Shirley, Old Fort Lane, Fredricton, New Brunswick"

ELSIE

Who is Walter Shirley?

Anne looks as if the world has come crashing down around her.

ELSIE (CONT'D)

How did Marilla know your family if your parents died when you were born?

Anne opens the letter. She stares at the signature and attempts to read the letter.

ANNE

"My dearest...

Then she passes it to Elsie to read.

CONTINUED: (2)21

ELSIE (CONT'D)

Shall I? "My dearest daughter - please accept this note as confirmation that I have come into such better circumstances in my life and so I feel it is my duty to try to contact you...

EXT. CHURCH -- DAY22

Elsie's voice dissolves into Walter's. Walter and BRIDE exit the Church, in silhouette, to a jubilant crowd throwing rice.

WALTER (V.O.)

I finally had the good luck to marry that wonderful woman.

INT. FREDRICKTON HARDWARE STORE -- DAY23

Walter oversees staff piling lumber in a well-stocked hardware emporium.

ELSIE (V.O.)

I have a prosperous hardware business in Fredericton now.

EXT. SHIRLEY HOME FREDRICKTON -- DAY24

Walter sits at a desk by a hurricane lamp writing. His Wife (seen from the waist up) puts his arm on his shoulder and pats his back. Walter's eyes are full of emotion.

WALTER (V.O.)

It is my sincere hope that you can forgive me for the expanse of time that has lapsed between us and come back to me.

EXT. GREEN GABLES -- EVENING25

MARILLA stands on the verandah of Green Gables facing the mysterious NELLIE PARKHURST, handing her a dubious letter.

WALTER (V.O.)

I realize you are likely in much better circumstances than we could ever provide, and so I have entrusted our mutual acquaintance Miss Nellie Parkhurst to make contact with you again; and to determine if my approach is acceptable to you and your guardians.

CONTINUED:25

Marilla accepts the letter, but she coldly turns away without a word. Nellie turns away into the shadows.

INT. GREEN GABLES, MARILLA'S BEDROOM -- MORNING26

Anne is in tears at this astounding surprise. Elsie looks up from reading the letter. Anne goes to the closet and peers into the vacant cubby hole.

ELSIE

For so many years your Mother wanted me to quit the logging camp and build a home for us. Maybe now I can fulfill my promise. If you cannot forgive me for the harm that has come to you as a result of my neglect, I will respect your wishes. Any response would be welcome. Your loving father, Walter"

INT. GREEN GABLES, MARILLA'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT27

Marilla double stares at the letter. She pulls up the floor boards and hides the inconceivable dispatch forever.

ANNE (V.O.)

Marilla must have felt she needed to protect me; or she was frightened I'd leave...

INT. GREEN GABLES, MARILLA'S BEDROOM -- MORNING28

Anne gets up and turns back to face Elsie and John.

ELSIE

Protect you from what?

ANNE

With Marilla, that would have been an instinct.

JOHN

So you weren't an orphan?

Anne sits down on the floor and sighs.

ANNE

As a child I made up stories about my parents, but no one knew a thing about me so it was . . . it was easy. I'd given up hope of ever finding my father.

Anne gets up.

ANNE

Here, let me help.

CONTINUED:28

Anne hugs Elsie.

ANNE

What luck finding Marilla's letters. What luck.

JOHN

Do you mind if we tell mom. She always said with your imagination you were destined to be a great writer.

ANNE

Yeah, I longed to write once. But now I do it just to work out everything else.

EXT. GREEN GABLES, UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- DAY29

Anne leads John and Elsie downstairs, feeling inept.

ELSIE

You never can tell why certain people decide to write. Obviously, it's very personal.

ANNE

(laughing)

Yes, well, certain people "are born to trouble"... while others, like your mother, are blessed with the desire to play golf.

EXT. GREEN GABLES -- DAY30

John loads the last of the luggage into their truck. Elsie looks wistfully back at Green Gables, as she and Anne walk along the picket fence.

ELSIE

Thank you Anne. From our entire family. Mother says she'll call once she knows it's been sold. Truth be, she hasn't written because didn't want to discuss it. We had so many wonderful years growing up here.

Why did you ever give it to us?

Anne pauses, smelling the sea air. She is at home.

ANNE

Oh well, Gil's medical practice wasn't in this area and your parents were down on their luck...

Anne shrugs. It was the ultimate act of self-sacrifice. Elsie has tears in her eyes.

ELSIE

Don't sell it Anne.

Anne looks at the "For Sale" sign, sitting pertly on the lawn. Anne sighs.

ANNE

Oh well, I have complicated feelings about the place.

ELSIE

I know. We'll talk soon okay?

CONTINUED:30

Anne hugs Elsie, then look sat her squarely and smiles. Anne helps Elsie into the truck. She kisses John and waves good bye.

ANNE (V.O.)

I don't know how I survived the time before I was adopted by the Cuthberts. It was horrible after my mother died. The Thomas' gave up on me and I lost hope of ever seeing my father again.

INT. CARRIAGE -- DAY31

Young Anne sits in a carriage holding hands with Louisa.

LOUISA

The cash from selling your mother's things was given to the town. They'll pay your board here for a time.

We're leaving. Sadly my husband...has lost his license to practice medicine.

Young Anne looks up at her begging with every particle of her to stay with the Thomases.

YOUNG ANNE

Can't you keep me until my father comes?

LOUISA

You need to know...that your father is gone for good.

YOUNG ANNE

I heard your husband say he drowned in his own sorrow. But he isn't really dead is he?

LOUISA

In some respects, he is. Things haven't worked out for either of us Anne.

CONTINUED:31

Louisa puts Young Anne's forlorn face in her hands. Young Anne and Louisa both have tears in their eyes.

EXT. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE -- EVENING32

The carriage drives along a gloomy, misty road. Young Anne is helped out of the carriage by a SUPERINTENDENT; a self-important woman in her mid-fifties. Louisa steps down to give Anne a kiss. The Superintendent tugs Anne, scowling.

SUPERINTENDENT

No need for theatrics Louisa. You've done your duty. God help you keep that sorry husband of yours sober in the next town.

Crushed, Louisa closes the carriage door. Her bag slung over her shoulder, Young Anne looks back as Louisa pulls away. The Superintendent pushes her along through the gates.

SUPERINTENDENT (CONT'D)

Your life is cursed girl! Thank your stars the County found the room.

The ominous Victorian Poorhouse looms at the end of an uninviting lane.

INT. DINING HALL -- DAY33

The Superintendent enters the hall with Anne. They face the Overseer's Wife.

OVERSEER'S WIFE

A child like this would be much better placed in an Orphanage or a foster home.

SUPERINTENDENT

No family will take her in after that sorry business with the father. Now that the Doc Thomases are leaving town, the County has a responsibility. You have to take her.

The Overseer's Wife shrugs and points the way for her to follow.

OVERSEER'S WIFE

We'll do what we can.

AIN'T. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE -- NIGHT33A

Young Anne is escorted by the OVERSEER'S WIFE along a dank, candlelit corridor.

OVERSEER'S WIFE

We don't normally take children. A little beggar like you should thank the Lord that we've taken pity on you at all.

Some Inmates lie on cots on the floor, some in beds. There are no children. Anne even witnesses certain inmates chained to their beds as she passes rooms.

It is an asylum for the elderly, the incurable and the insane.

They pass by a big, brutish ELDERLY MAN in his seventies who clangs on the grill with his cup for water.

OVERSEER'S WIFE

Stop it!

ELDERLY MAN

Water! I need water!

The Overseer's Wife cruelly throws water at him through the grill, sending him reeling and wailing. Anne is stunned.

OVERSEER'S WIFE

Some of 'em here need to be kept in check at all times. You can sleep with these three.

Young Anne bluntly faces a bed full of THREE WOMEN, all snoring.
The Overseer tosses her a nightgown and uniform.

CONTINUED:33

YOUNG ANNE

(very politely)

To sleep in such cramped quarters is greater than even my imagination can abide.

OVERSEER'S WIFE

We don't harbor royalty here miss.

OVERSEER'S WIFE

I understood a room was paid for on my behalf.

OVERSEER'S WIFE

You either put up or shut up. Least these old girls don't have fleas!

The Overseer's Wife pushes and prods the women over in the bed to make way for young Anne. The youngest, MARY, a woman in her thirties, opens an eye. She looks crazed.

OVERSEER'S WIFE (CONT'D)

Put this uniform on at sunrise when you get up. Move over girls. You won't need whatever's in there. You'll be assigned chores first thing. By the way, I heard all about Walter Shirley.

Young Anne nods. The Wife turns abruptly, murmuring.

OVERSEER'S WIFE (CONT'D)

The price of atonement for the sins of the father. You understand that girl?

YOUNG ANNE

(nodding)

Yes Ma'am.

Young Anne is crestfallen. She bustles modestly into the nighttime, catching her reflection in the window.

YOUNG ANNE

(nodding)

Could you move over please?

As Young Anne tries to climb into bed, Mary roughly pushes her onto the floor. She glares at her, then closes her eyes.

Fearful, Young Anne snuggles on top of her bag, closing her eyes and shivering. Looking up through the casement windows, she sees the OVERSEER and guests dining in well-to-do furnishings in an adjoining building compared to the horrors inflicted on other inmates.

CONTINUED: (2)33

ANNE (V.O.)

I really didn't understand. I'd never experienced hypocrisy before. It was incomprehensible to me how a loving God could abandon me. I didn't want to give in. I decided that God had just forgotten about everyone in that place and in my heart I was afraid something awful was going to happen.

EXT. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE -- MORNING34

Some of the chained INMATES grind corn, others push wheelbarrows onto the field to spread the mixture as fertilizer. Young Anne picks oakum in intense heat.

ANNE (V.O.)

I was terrified something awful was going to happen and that it would crush me.

EXT. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE, DINING HALL --
EVENING35

Frost covers the window panes. Snow falls. "God is Love" is painted over the doorway of the dingy hall. INMATES sit at a long table, being served bread and gruel. The crazy ones have petty fights with each other over food. Young

Anne sits alongside her three ancient women, trying not to be noticed, sipping gruel. MARY goes through Anne's bag under her chair and start to pilfer her clothes and schoolbooks.

MARY

What did you bring in your suitcase?

ANNE

What are you doing? No stop!

In barely an instant the books are passed around the table, and the Inmates wrangle over them. Bedlam erupts like a sport with much shrieking and laughing.

Unexpectedly the OVERSEER storms in, as his Wife and her Staff snatch the books from the Inmates. Young Anne is terrified at the mayhem. The Overseer strikes a long cane on the table, upsetting a basin of gruel all over the floor.

OVERSEER

Silence!! You are here because God in his wisdom has chosen to make you paupers! Not animals! But dependent on the charity of others nevertheless.

The table of Inmates settles down out of intimidation. Young Anne sees the Overseer's Wife throw her precious books and clothes into the fire.

ANNE

No!

CONTINUED:35

OVERSEER (CONT'D)

And God in his wisdom has chosen us to help you find spirituality with your lot in life. Harmony is to be maintained here at any cost.

She stands up and cries out.

ANNE

Those are my only possessions. No!

The Overseer zones in on the little girl with the big voice.

OVERSEER

Come here YOU!

Young Anne obeys. The Overseer's Wife pushes her forward roughly. The Overseer takes her and stands her on a stool.

OVERSEER (CONT'D)

You see this young brat. Her father is a criminal who is accused of doing in his own wife. Keep away from her. Be wary of her manner of speech, which she uses to deceive.

He smiles at his Wife. He speaks patronizingly.

OVERSEER'S WIFE

God knows what illicit writings such schoolbooks contain.

ANNE

No!

OVERSEER'S WIFE

They are and condemned to the flames!

The Overseer grabs Young Anne's chin.

OVERSEER

Innocent as a dove, cunning as a serpent. Only stiff punishment can save her.

The Staff remove unfinished food and push the Inmates away from the table. The Overseer hoists Anne up onto the table.

OVERSEER (CONT'D)

God chose to put a child in our midst to test our skill at recognizing the difference between good and evil.

We will punish her!

CONTINUED: (2)35

The Overseer and the wife escort Anne into a dark room makes her stand on a stool.

OVERSEER (CONT'D)

No one gets away with this kind of behavior here. You will remain standing until daybreak.

OVERSEER WIFE

God punishes the disobedient with eternal damnation.

INT. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE, HALLWAY --
NIGHT36

Young Anne stands on a stool in the dark sobbing with folded hands; her hair piled on her head under an apron.

ANNE (V.O.)

I tried to imagine someone finding me. Someone who'd rescue me and care for me.

She hears dire sounds coming from behind a bolted door. She gets down, and follows the noise from a grill at the end of the hall.

YOUNG ANNE

I gather no-one is supposed to speak to you. Want some water?

The Elderly Man raises his head deliriously to see Anne's sweet face. He stops wailing. He nods and watches her break the ice to fill his cup, then return. The wind howls.

YOUNG ANNE (CONT'D)

You've been here an eternity haven't you?

The Elderly Man nods and gratefully sips his water. Young Anne takes the apron from her head.

YOUNG ANNE (CONT'D)

I've been standing in the dark trying to imagine I was a bride in a misty veil waiting an eternity for her betrothed, who has left her at the altar. This is a far worse place than anything even I could imagine, so it was a task to pretend.

The Elderly Man looks up sadly.

YOUNG ANNE

I'm sorry for rambling on so...

ELDERLY MAN

No one ever talks to me...do go on.

CONTINUED:36

YOUNG ANNE

Well when I saw how tyrannical the

Matron was to you that first day, I knew instinctively you were the product of a lifelong sorrow.

The Man smiles sweetly at the child's vivid imagination.

ELDERLY MAN

I dare not talk about that, the walls have ears.

YOUNG ANNE

Why was she so cruel to you then?

ELDERLY MAN

She's afraid. I know the secret to free everyone in this place. But you see, I'm not leaving until I finish my life's vocation and there's so much that I need help. I have the key to freedom.

He leans to the grill. Young Anne leans in. The Elderly Man thinks about it, then looks up sadly and whispers. He lifts a couple of floorboards in his cell. He pulls out an old iron key.

YOUNG ANNE

And you allow yourself to remain imprisoned!?

He begins to pull out a treasure trove of books, notebooks and curiosities from an old carpetbag buried under the floor.

ELDERLY MAN (CONT'D)

I am editing the history of every word in the English language - for posterity.

He passes her a single volume for inspection.

YOUNG ANNE

I'm so sorry.

Young Anne stops. Coming out of her ???, her face falls suddenly.

YOUNG ANNE

I don't mean to be impolite sir.

But I'm afraid the dictionary has already been invented. Did you not know that?

ELDERLY MAN

I've never heard of such a word before.

CONTINUED: (2)36

She watches him scribbling and realizes that he is delirious.

YOUNG ANNE

You don't have a single soul in the world, do you?

ELDERLY MAN (whispers)

I had a wife and daughter once.

They console me still... here...

He touches his heart.

ELDERLY MAN (CONT'D)

As life marches on you don't know how difficult it is to draw a line between the past and the present.

YOUNG ANNE (CONT'D)

We are imprisoned here, forever.

ELDERLY MAN

Please...there's so much work to be done... memories, notations... they all need to be copied...

He puts the key away neatly in place. He passes the child blank paper and reams of scribbled notes.

ELDERLY MAN (CONT'D)

...at night...when no-one can see. Young Anne smiles, realizing the pathos of this poor soul.

YOUNG ANNE

I will help you. What's your name?

ELDERLY MAN

Gabriel... Blake.

Young Anne perks up as though she has had a revelation.

YOUNG ANNE

Gabriel... Gabriel was a heavenly messenger wasn't he?

Young Anne takes the notes and goes back to the stool to copy them in the moonlight. She soon falls asleep.

INT. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE, DINING HALL --
MORNING37

The Overseer escorts the Superintendent and several COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES into the Dining Hall to inspect the conditions. Inmates line the tables awaiting food and 'grace'.

OVERSEER

The County should be pleased at the God-fearing ideals of all our tenants.

Purged of pride here, and eager for employment each one earns their keep.

AIN'T. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE, HALLWAY --
MORNING37A

A loud clanging bell is heard off in the distance. Inmates are being summoned to meet the County Representatives. Young Anne wakes up with a start. She takes a second to realize where she is. She scurries back up onto the stool surrounded by notes. Gabriel and others are led to the Dining Hall. The Overseer's Wife stands at the end of the hall.

OVERSEER'S WIFE

What devilment are you up to? Where did you get this? Surely you don't think you're above rules. Get in there.

She marches the length of the hall and drags Young Anne away.

CONTINUED:37

The Overseer's Wife drags Young Anne in into the Hall by the hair, grasping the crumpled notes.

OVERSEER'S WIFE (CONT'D)

This child is very disobedient. Gabriel Blake has been filling her head full of foolishness.

She places Anne at the end of a table.

OVERSEER

As members of the board, I am pleased to be able to demonstrate to you our exacting methods of inmate discipline. This sad little demon has fallen prey to the defiant tactics of our resident lunatic. Her flaming hair is the real cause of her devilish behavior.

He grabs Young Anne's loose hair and yanks it into a knot.

OVERSEER (CONT'D)

Scissors please Matron.

Young Anne screams when she realizes what is about to happen.

YOUNG ANNE

No, you can't, sir! No! No! No!

CONTINUED:37

His Wife passes him the scissors. Young Anne screams and pleads as the Overseer mangles her hair to the nape of her neck. He pushes her to the floor, holding up the shock of hair for the crowd to see; before handing it to the Overseer's wife.

OVERSEER (CONT'D)

Take this matron... and burn it. Let the County know that Bolingbroke Asylum bears witness to Christian principles alone. You will stand again until daybreak.

The Overseer escorts the Representatives out of the Hall.

SUPERINTENDANT

I'd like to speak to you outside.

OVERSEER'S WIFE

Don't you dare! No one acknowledge this guttersnipe!

Gabriel steps forward and takes a cup of water to Young Anne to the complete astonishment of the Overseer's Wife.

The Overseer's Wife nods to STAFF.

OVERSEER'S WIFE

You know the routine orderlies!

They escort Gabriel out. Overseer's wife takes cup away from Anne.

OVERSEER'S WIFE

Give me that cup.

EXT. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE -- DAY38

A clanging bell denotes the end of mealtime. Snow falls heavily. Gabriel is chained to a hitching post in the middle of the yard. The wind howl. Gabriel cries out in defiance.

INT. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE, HALLWAY -- DAY39

Young Anne turns and gazes out the window. Her face is tearstained.

EXT. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE -- EVENING40

Gabriel succumbs to the cold and sinks against the post, then onto the ground.

INT. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE, HALLWAY -- NIGHT41

Young Anne watches the clock on the wall, as the shadows dwindle into darkness. Tears run down her face.

INT. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE, HALLWAY --
NIGHT42

Young Anne is taken down from the stool by the Superintendent and led away down the hall.

SUPERINTENDENT

Your little scrap is just worsening your trial here by inciting calamity.

Young Anne bursts into tears.

YOUNG ANNE

I'm devastated. It's all my fault.

SUPERINTENDENT

Nevermind. There is a darkness here which needs to be rectified. Your innocence may assist me, if I have my way.

INT. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE -- NIGHT43

Young Anne lies in bed. She hears Gabriel cry out. She gets up and listens.

INT. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE, INFIRMARY HALL --
NIGHT44

The Superintendent consults with a DOCTOR. They close the Infirmary door and disappear down the hallway into shadow.

SUPERINTENDENT

I can see we have no choice, Doctor.

We either condemn the building and expel the Overseers. But I indeed want this child to speak to our entire board at the right opportunity.

INT. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE, INFIRMARY --
NIGHT45

Gabriel lies perspiring and shivering in his bed. Young Anne creeps into the room to his bed.

YOUNG ANNE

Gabriel... are you awake? I heard the Superintendent. She wants to help.

GABRIEL/ELDERLY MAN

She wants.. the Doctor to send me away.

YOUNG ANNE

I'll go fetch all your books and notes.

GABRIEL/ELDERLY MAN

The secret...

YOUNG ANNE

The key?

CONTINUED:45

GABRIEL/ELDERLY MAN

Under the boards...in the bag. It's yours. Go... now. Freedom... whenever you need it.

YOUNG ANNE

I won't go...'til they bring you back.

Anne takes the key. Gabriel touches Young Anne's face.

GABRIEL/ELDERLY MAN

Hold my hand.

She takes his hand in hers. He struggles to breathe.

GABRIEL/ELDERLY MAN (CONT'D)

... so splendid to have a friend. You're a true kindred spirit.

ANNE

What's that?

GABRIEL/ELDERLY MAN

A Kindred Spirit...someone you can rely on, right to your innermost soul. I feel so tired...

Gabriel closes his eyes. His hand drops as he dies. The child is stunned.

YOUNG ANNE

Gabriel?

Young Anne lets go of his hand. Agitated, he waves her off.

INT. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE, DINING HALL --
DAY46

Young Anne stands in silhouette before the Board of Governors of the Poorhouse who accumulate their notes. Young Anne is making gestures with her hands as to what happened.

ANNE (V.O.)

Angels have watched over me my whole life. Rescuing me. The Board of Bolingbroke County Poorhouse listened to me. It was a feeling I had never experienced before. It made me begin to feel like I had a voice.

EXT. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE, CEMETERY --
EVENING47

Blossoms bloom in the pink shadows of a spring evening. Inmates get into a Paddy Wagon behind the Asylum.

Her hair in braids, Young Anne kneels at the clump of earth by Gabriel's headstone, inscribed "Gabriel Blake 1824-1899".

The Overseer's Wife lurks, surveying her, then approaches.

OVERSEER'S WIFE

The County Board has found a special foster home for you in Perth girl. Consider it an honor they've gone to such trouble. You'll leave tomorrow.

YOUNG ANNE

It's no honor having you be the one to tell me so Matron.

OVERSEER'S WIFE (turning vicious)

Who would have thought a child so cunning could have brought about the downfall of everything we built.

Young Anne tries to contain her anger.

YOUNG ANNE

I'm glad I hurt you. You've hurt me more than my own father. You and your husband haven't a spark of kindness in you!

The Overseer's Wife looks like she is about to lunge at her.

Young Anne moves behind Gabriel's headstone holding onto it.

YOUNG ANNE (CONT'D)

I'll never forget what you did to Gabriel. You... you had no right!

Young Anne tenderly lets go of the headstone and runs off, leaving the Overseer's Wife standing looking contemptuous.

The Superintendent closes and locks the gate as the Police Wagon disappears down the lane.

EXT. BOLINGBROKE COUNTY POORHOUSE -- EVENING48

The lights in the Overseer's Quarters are extinguished.

Young Anne slips out a door in the Asylum basement. She unlocks the large iron gate with Gabriel's secret key. She runs down the Lane carrying his enormous carpet bag.

EXT. BRIDGE / RAVINE -- NIGHT49

Young Anne crosses a bridge. She faces a carriage barreling towards her out of the dark. Climbing down the embankment, she hides under the bridge and watches the Police Wagon. She decides to go by the river and embarks into the ravine.

It envelops her like a primeval jungle. She becomes confused and frightened at the shadows everywhere. Imagining she is being followed,

she bolts further into the dense bracken.

She collapses, trapped and terrified, that she is being pulled down by some creature at her ankles.

EXT. BOLINGBROKE HOTEL -- DAWN50

As the light rises on the horizon, young Anne realizes she is merely caught in vines and undergrowth around her ankles. She loosens herself from the brush. Perched above her is a tall Hotel overlooking the river. She sees four figures lowering themselves out of a window on a rope of bed-sheets. Young Anne squints and realizes who it is. Louisa coaxes Violetta and her two younger brothers, KEITH and JOCK down her escape route. Young Anne calls out.

YOUNG ANNE

Mrs. Thomas! Mrs. Thomas!

Louisa looks around apoplectic that someone is watching them.

Panicking, she yanks Jock down from the sheet. He tumbles on top of her in disaster. Louisa is barely able to pick up her bags and her children and run off; praying no-one will stop them. They descend into the very gorge that Young Anne is wandering in. The four slide down the embankment into a muddy limbo.

EXT. RAVINE -- MORNING51

Young Anne watches and pursues them, shouting.

LOUISA

Good Lord! Anne Shirley! What in heaven's name are you doing here...?

ANNE

Violetta! Mrs. Thomas!

Mrs. Thomas nearly faints when Young Anne explodes into view, covered in bracken.

YOUNG ANNE

Fate has brought us together. Jock, Keith, wait! You look entirely like thieves running.

Louisa is mortified. She glances back up the hill. A maid leans out the Hotel window, calling. She pulls up the sheets.

LOUISA

That's putting it mildly. I don't know what you're doing but we couldn't possibly take on a runaway when we're running away ourselves!

CONTINUED:51

Louisa hustles her three children and Young Anne along the river bed and into oblivion.

YOUNG ANNE

You won't help me? I beg of you, Mrs. Thomas.

Louisa concedes and the five of them take off.

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS -- DAY52

Four hot and weary travelers rove the track in the noonday sun. They approach a lone whistle stop.

LOUISA

This is a pretty piece of business.

YOUNG ANNE

I know how to be resourceful. I've even thought of changing my name so no-one would ever recognize me again. I'd love to be called something elegant like Cordelia.

KEITH

That's a horrible name.

YOUNG ANNE

What about Geraldine Fitzgerald!?

Jock chortles. Violetta is indignant.

VIOLETTA

Who cares what you're called! You can't stay with us and that's final.

Young Anne looks up at Louisa as if she is going to cry.

YOUNG ANNE

You and my mother were best of friends. That practically makes us kin.

JOCK

Didn't you hear our mother. We're in too much trouble as it is. No thanks to you.

Young Anne is confused.

LOUISA

Stop it Jock.

YOUNG ANNE

There is a poetic irony that we are all together as fugitives. Is that the trouble you mean?

52CONTINUED:52

LOUISA

Yes. Well you see Anne, things went from bad to worse. After your father vanished, so did the funds from the parish roof box and the town accused my husband, but he insisted it was your father.

VIOLETTA

Your father is trash Anne.

LOUISA

And so we've been living under house arrest in the Halfway Hotel awaiting an inquest... because... my husband was killed... by a train.

Louisa sits down at the whistle-stop, her face in her hands. Keith puts his arm around her. Young Anne is speechless.

YOUNG ANNE

Do you think he was...I'm in the depths of despair.

LOUISA

Being a doctor's wife has been a life of bitter disappointment, Anne.

YOUNG ANNE

I can hardly swallow

VIOLETTA

It will be too much for mother to be cross-examined and go back over it all for the inquest. Our

Grandmother is very rich and she wants us to live with her.

YOUNG ANNE

Is there anything I can do to help?

Violetta helps her mother up. The group starts walking again.

VIOLETTA

Leave us alone.

Completely stunned Young Anne swallows the lump in her throat.

LOUISA

When we get to St. John, we'll get you some place safe. Stand back.

INT. ST. JOHN TRAIN STATION -- DAY53

Young Anne and the Thomases are at the wicket in the station.

Young Anne is awed at the vast building with people moving everywhere. Louisa turns back from the wicket with tickets.

LOUISA

Apparently there is a Foundling Home in Fredricton, just outside Marysville?

CLERK

Yes, that would be St. Agatha's asylum, ma'am.

LOUISA

I'm sorry Anne, but we'll have to drop you off there. Thank you for your directions.

Hurry up! Boys, hurry up! The train leaves in 3 minutes!

Young Anne smiles feebly trying to resign herself. Louisa takes the boys' hands and gives two tickets to Violetta, who aversely takes Anne's hand; the wheels turning in her head.

YOUNG ANNE

I've made up my mind to simply enjoy this train ride. Train rides are so thrilling.

The children roll their eyes.

VIOLETTA

For pity sake, it's only a train.

Violetta tarries behind slightly, eyeing her mother getting further ahead. She purposely distracts Young Anne.

VIOLETTA (CONT'D)

Here, could you take your own ticket? It's your responsibility.

Violetta stops at a flower stall overflowing with color.

VIOLETTA (CONT'D)

We need to get some flowers for Grandmother. You choose the colors. Mother has change.

Anne obediently sets about pulling together a bouquet.

YOUNG ANNE

What lovely wild roses! Looking so happy to be roses.

53CONTINUED:53

VIOLETTA

Could I just have some change? We're going to buy some flowers for Grandmother.

YOUNG ANNE

I wish roses could talk.

FLOWER VENDOR

They'd surely have hopeful thoughts.

CONDUCTOR

All passengers now boarding for Moncton, Miramichi, Bathurst...

Young Anne smiles at the warmhearted VENDOR. Having obtained a few coins, Violetta frantically pays for the flowers. She pulls Young Anne onto the platform.

VIOLETTA

There you are. Hurry up, mother says we're late. Hurry up, Anne. I suppose mother is already on the train.

Young Anne checks the ticket and climbs in the wrong car.

YOUNG ANNE

I hope your Grandmother likes pink.

Redheaded people can never wear pink.

Violetta smiles, satisfied at abetting the blunder.

53AINT. TRAIN CAR -- DAY53A

Violetta leads Young Anne into an empty compartment

YOUNG ANNE

Did you ever know anybody whose hair was red when they were young,
but changed color when they grew up?

VIOLETTA

No, put your bag up.

YOUNG ANNE

Could you help me please, sir?

VIOLETTA

(pretending to call)

We're this way Mother!

CONDUCTOR

Last call...Moncton, Miramichi, Bathurst...all aboard, all aboard.

YOUNG ANNE

Thank you.

MAN

You're welcome.

53A CONTINUED: 53A

As Young Anne struggles to throw her bag up onto the luggage rack. Violetta disappears. Young Anne gets down as the train starts to pull away. She realizes she is alone. As the train moves, she suddenly sees Louisa and the boys getting on the car across the platform, which is just leaving. She hollers out the window. The whistle screeches.

YOUNG ANNE

Mrs. Thomas!! Mrs. Thomas!!! Mrs. Thomas!!!

LOUISA

Anne, what are you doing? You're going the wrong way.

CONDUCTOR

Last call for passengers for Marysville and Fredericton, all aboard.

YOUNG ANNE

Mrs. Thomas!!! You're on the wrong train!

She tries to get her bag down but it is stuck. Louisa runs along the platform watching and calling to her at the window.

LOUISA

No Anne! You're on the wrong train. Come on, Anne. Hurry. Anne, we don't have time. Anne.

Suddenly Violetta and the boys are running beside Louisa.

Louisa loses her purse and is immobilized looking for it.

Young Anne gets her bag down in the nick of time to jump.

LOUISA

Hurry, that's our train. Hurry, hurry. Who ahs my purse? I left it right here. Hurry, that's our train. Hurry. The only train to Fredericton until tomorrow.

VIOLETTA

Grandmother will be waiting on the other end and she will burst a blood vessel.

EXT. ST. JOHN TRAIN STATION PLATFORM -- DAY54

Keith runs along the platform and helps Young Anne jump off at the last second. Behind them their own train has gathered speed and is pulling away. Louisa shrieks and starts to wave. The caboose pulls away. All five stand miserably on the platform.

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EXT. ST. JOHN TRAIN STATION PLATFORM -- NIGHT55

The boys are asleep on a bench. Violetta pretends to be sleeping, but is still fuming. She picks at the wilted roses.

YOUNG ANNE

I blame myself entirely Mrs. Thomas. Violetta was following me. If I hadn't lost myself in the beauty of those colorful blossoms. I've had so little color in my life lately.

Insult has been added to injury; now that we're obliged to sleep in a common railway station.

Louisa pats her arms. She tries to resist becoming emotional.

LOUISA

I'm just cross at myself because I lost my purse... and all my money. My mother-in-law will be entirely unimpressed.

YOUNG ANNE

Feel free to blame this mess on a hapless orphan who wasn't given the brains God gave geese, Mrs. Thomas.

LOUISA

You must call me Louisa. You know your Mother was quite brilliant.

She used to help me with my Sunday school. She really knew how to foster intellect. She was a wonderful teacher who knew ever so many lovely poems. "The Lady of the Lake" and "The Seasons" by Thurston. She cultivated me and if you are half as bright as she is, then I know you'll make a wonderful teacher too one day, Anne.

Young Anne's lip trembles.

YOUNG ANNE

You've given me hope Mrs...Louisa. I'd hate to part ways on bad terms, especially since I was trying so hard to imagine you'd keep me forever.

Louisa smiles and nods.

YOUNG ANNE (CONT'D)

I'd hate to part ways haunted by the uncomfortable feeling I'd created havoc in your life... especially when I was trying so hard to imagine you'd

keep me forever.

CONTINUED: (2)56

LOUISA (CONT'D)

I have a confession to make, Anne. I took some money from the sale of your mother's things. Not a lot, but I was short at the time and my husband wasn't very dependable and I was so cross over your father. I now see that and I were destined to be great friends Anne. I won't desert you either.

Young Anne is shocked at this revelation, kissing her cheek. Violetta rolls her eyes and begins to hatch a new plot.

EXT. ST. JOHN TRAIN STATION PLATFORM -- EARLY MORNING57

Young Anne assists a COACHWOMAN (NELLIE PARKHURST) hoist mail bags onto a lorry-wagon from a MAIL TRAIN CAR. The lorry reads Royal Mail Post with a provincial crest.

YOUNG ANNE

I'll help you all morning if you can give us a ride.

COACHWOMAN

But if you really want a ride, you better tell me your name.

YOUNG ANNE

My name is Cordelia Shirley. We walked all the way from Bolingbroke and missed our train.

COACHWOMAN

You don't know a Walter Shirley from Bolingbroke do ya... accused of doing his wife in as I recall?

YOUNG ANNE

No ma'am. I've never heard of such a man.

COACHWOMAN

Got a contract for the mail route up to Grand Falls.

YOUNG ANNE

My father was called Jedediah. Even though it's rather a woeful name, don't you think?

COACHWOMAN

An odd name...to be sure. What did Jedediah Shirley do?

CONTINUED:57

YOUNG ANNE

My parents were teachers at the Bolingbroke Primary School.

They each died of a fever when I was only three months. They were a pair of babies themselves. I've had the good fortune to be rescued from an Asylum by friends. We're all going to live in Marysville. They're members of the affluent Thomas family. The Coachman raises an eyebrow.

COACHWOMAN

Thomases you say? And you never met old Mrs. T?

Young Anne shakes her head and points.

YOUNG ANNE

No, but young Mrs. Thomas over there is as benevolent as she is loyal.

The Coachwoman raises an eyebrow dubiously.

COACHWOMAN

Get your bags. Anyone knows the

Thomas place, if they know Marysville.

YOUNG ANNE

Oh, thank you.

Young Anne can barely contain herself as she hoists her carpet bag up onto the lorry, then runs to wake up the Louisa.

YOUNG ANNE

Louisa! Violetta..boys! Wake up.

The sun is shining on us this morning. The chaos I've caused is over!

EXT. MAIL LORRY, NEW BRUNSWICK ROAD -- DAY58

Young Anne sits up front beside the Coachman. Louisa and family sit on the mail on each side of the lorry.

VIOLETTA

I cannot believe we had to stay over in that train station, thanks to you, Anne.

YOUNG ANNE

I'm sorry I vexed you Violetta, but it gives me great satisfaction to know that the inequity has been righted. I feel just like a heroine in a novel.

CONTINUED:58

VIOLETTA

You talk too much. Don't be so certain Grandmother won't throw you out on your head...

Louisa hushes Violetta. The two bicker under their breath.

LOUISA

Be nice to her. She's interesting.

VIOLETTA

It'd be more to the point if she was useful. Grandmother will toss all of us out when she hears her nonsense.

YOUNG ANNE

Well I won't worry about Asylums for a little longer. I'm going to imagine this is all part of a beautiful mirage and thank God for it two and

three times a minute.

The Coachwoman smiles at the child's optimistic resolve. The road radiates with dappled sunlight.

EXT. TOWN OF MARYSVILLE -- DAY59

The Mail lorry drives through Marysville, a prosperous lumber town with saw, cotton and cider MILLS all emblazoned with the Thomas name. This is a company town laid out by the Thomases right down to the bricks and mortar. Nellie waves to passersby in the town. It's a happy setting. Children playing on the street. Banners announcing a summer fair.

People fishing in the pond. A picturesque Maritime community.

COACHWOMAN

We're right proud of this place.

Marysville was named by old Mr. Thomas who built the Mill, on account of it's always been so merry.

The Coachwoman sniffs at her own joke.

EXT. THOMAS MANSION, MARYSVILLE -- DAY60

The lorry approaches a tall mansion, with colossal gates, a majestic widow's walk, and stately formal gardens.

YOUNG ANNE

Christopher Columbus! I must be dreaming..?.

VIOLETTA

You certainly are!

LOUISA

There's no need to be nasty, Violetta!

CONTINUED:60

As they pull up to the Thomas mansion, HEPZIBAH LEACH, the

Housekeeper comes out of the house to stop the lorry. She glowers at the Coachwoman as Louisa and family climb off.

HEPZIBAH

God's nightgown! We wondered what in heaven's name happened. And now Mrs. Thomas has gone all the way to St. John looking for you.

LOUISA

Hepzibah, no, please. Don't.

HEPZIBAH

If she has a coronary on the way you'll never hear the end of it!

(gawking at Anne)

Louisa Thomas. What is that?

LOUISA

Oh, it's the most heartrending story.

Please just keep my Mother-in-law calm until she has a chance to get her used to the idea.

HEPZIBAH

You don't mean to think I'd take in a street-urchin like that! You don't march in here with some stray cur thinking she'll be of use to me.

The Coachwoman absorbs the entire scenario.

Louisa escorts Hepzibah away, as uniformed servants arrive to help the children carry their belongings.

LOUISA

But, she is such a bright little creature. And her mother was my good friend. I promised the little thing she could stay with us. I'm not about to break my promise. She can do house chores.

HEPZIBAH

She doesn't cross the threshold of this household!

Young Anne who stands by the lorry, lip quivering. Violetta smiles.

Young Anne stands frozen in the drive. The Coachwoman studies Louisa and Hepzibah - marching off in debate.

CONTINUED: (2)60

COACHWOMAN

I have been waiting to settle a score with that one for awhile. You have any trouble, ask for Nellie The Whip.

YOUNG ANNE

Thank you. I am grateful for all your help.

Doffing a hat, the Coachwoman gives Young Anne a reassuring squeeze. Young Anne is in awe of her skill as climbs up and maneuvers her around and down the drive.

Young Anne looks up to see Louisa and Violetta returning.

LOUISA

Hepzibah hasn't any house chores for you to abide by, but she's agreed you can help in the stable though. Violetta will show you the barn out back.

Louisa smiles helplessly at Young Anne as they saunter off.

YOUNG ANNE

Please tell her I'm very good at washing dishes, but I'm resigned to fit into a household any way I can.

Louisa nods watching the girls walk across the grounds.

YOUNG ANNE

What a splendid property

VIOLETTA

Hurry up, Anne!

YOUNG ANNE

I'm just so excited to imagine that I can stay for a little while.

VIOLETTA

Stables are this way.

EXT. THOMAS MANSION, GARDENS -- DAY61

A taciturn Violetta stomps across a footbridge over a brook, leading young Anne to the gardens on a millpond and stables.

YOUNG ANNE A brooks! Brooks are such cheerful things aren't they? Always laughing; even in winter under the ice.

CONTINUED:61

VIOLETTA

Can't you ever quit being so phony? Trash can Anne! That's what I'm going to call you, because you're garbage.

Violetta laughs at her own joke. Young Anne sets her jaw.

YOUNG ANNE

I wouldn't give myself such airs in the presence of a true aristocrat; myself being the progeny of royal Irish blood.

VIOLETTA

The only royal blood you'll ever have is with my fist on the end of your nose. You're a con just like your father.

Young Anne folds her arms furiously. She blows her cool.

YOUNG ANNE

(sarcastically)

You're so queenly. The test of a true noble is having such a high instep, a stream of water could run right underneath it! I don't believe anyone has that! Least of all you.

Young Anne takes off her shoes and strides down to the stream.

She arches her foot so delicately the rivulet runs under it.

YOUNG ANNE

My family are descendants of the warrior monarch - Queen Maeve led the Celts into battle riding bareback by moonlight. See?

Violetta finds the tale grand enough to set Young Anne up.

VIOLETTA

Queen Maeve sounds more like a witch than a Queen. Besides, you couldn't ride by moonlight, let alone mount a horse. Could you...?

Young Anne turns pale, but there is only one thing to be done. She marches over to the stable.

YOUNG ANNE

You just watch. I have a way with equines.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, STABLES -- DAY62

Young Anne boldly takes a bridle from the tack room and hoists it onto a MARE. She mounts a stool and climbs up bareback onto the horse. Violetta gets nervous and starts to backtrack.

VIOLETTA

Who do you think you are? This is foolish You can't blame me if you get yourself killed.

EXT. STABLES, THOMAS MANSION -- DAY63

Young Anne glowers at Violetta. The Mare canters off.

YOUNG ANNE

I shall prove you a liar or perish! Giddy-up!

The hayloft door abruptly swings shut behind them with a clang, spooking the horse. It takes off at a gallop. Young

Anne holds on to the reins and clawing at the animal's mane.

VIOLETTA

Anne! Mother! She's out of control!

LOUISA

Hepzibah! It's Anne!

EXT. THOMAS MANSION, GARDENS -- DAY64

The Mare bolts across the garden and down the drive; Violetta running and screaming in its wake. Louisa and Hepzibah hurry out onto the verandah, in utter disbelief.

Young Anne manages to get the mare to circle the garden. To avoid the shrubbery the Mare gallops down the driveway, meeting head on with AMELIA THOMAS' carriage coming straight through the gates. The CARRIAGE DRIVER and Horse balk in the face of disaster. The Driver sidesteps the deranged mare and drives into the millpond at the edge of the garden.

AMELIA

Charles, what the devil is going on? Charles, Charles, don't you have any control? Where are the grooms? Where is the stable boy? Stop, stop, stop!

The Mare winds back across the lawn, balking again at a wall of shrubbery; this time throwing Anne directly into the pond.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Who was that? Whose horse is that? Stop this carriage at once. Stop, stop, please. I'm going to lose my lunch.

She pulls herself out of the slime, cowering at the imposing dowager who steps out of the carriage onto the lawn. Amelia

Thomas is a tough-minded martinet who sneers at this imp.

CONTINUED:64

AMELIA

Louisa! If this is your manner of appreciation for my munificence, you can pack your bags and go.

LOUISA

Now don't excite yourself --

Louisa comes bounding across the lawn and trips on her face.

AMELIA

Of course, I'm going to excite myself! How long can a day go on, searching hither and yon for relations as giddy as cats out of a bag. And then to come home to this...mania in my front yard. Horses tearing up my garden.

Amelia proceeds to tear a strip towering over her, as Louisa picks herself up.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

And you driving my only son to drink with as much upheaval I'm sure.

LOUISA

Mother, I'm sorry but please --

Louisa gathers the children by her side, preparing for the worst as Amelia erupts into a torrent of pent-up emotion.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

And don't think for one minute that the gang of you can worm your way in here like I'm a doormat, to take advantage of a mother's broken heart.

Amelia turns away, bereft. Muddy Anne clambers after her.

YOUNG ANNE

Mrs. Thomas, oh Mrs. Thomas! Please don't think I'm lacking in sympathy. But Louisa is neither a worm, nor you a doormat.

AMELIA

What? Are you rumpled in the head child?

YOUNG ANNE

I may be rumpled in spirit but not in the head, Mrs. Thomas! Louisa and her children came here grieving for a father and a husband. The least you can do is offer some pity.

They've nowhere to go either.

CONTINUED: (2)64

Young Anne bursts into tears. Amelia is taken aback.

AMELIA

Who are you?

YOUNG ANNE

Anne Shirley ma'am. I should know better than to speak out but they are in just as much anguish as you.

Amelia looks at her grandchildren and composes herself.

AMELIA

Alright, alright. No need to get yourself in such a state on our account.

YOUNG ANNE

(getting worked up)

Oh but there is need! Imagine you were an orphan with nowhere to go.

And you'd come to a place like this hoping an important person like yourself might grant you a chance.

She lowers herself onto bent knee and kisses the hem of her dress. Amelia is embarrassed and pushes her away.

AMELIA

Alright, listen. I know tomfoolery when I see it.

Stand up for goodness sake and enough of this begging business.

Young Anne obeys, glancing back at Louisa who steps forward.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

And don't cast my prominence up at me either. It's been an extremely difficult day and I have a right to say what's is on my mind. Of course Louisa can stay.

YOUNG ANNE

Oh, thank you Mrs. Thomas. Withhold not my heart from any joy. Ecclesiastes Chapter two, verse ten.

Amelia waves young Anne away. She motions everyone back to the house.

AMELIA

Yes, I know. Stand up, dear and stop with the biblical authority. Any child who can act like a pagan one minute and quote the Old Testament the next, well it just turns my stomach.

This is a dissolute age Louisa, don't you think?

CONTINUED: (3)64

Amelia marches across the lawn as Hepzibah cowers.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Hepzibah, come here!! Why aren't my grandchildren settled in, for goodness sakes?! Don't ogle me like that. I just can't bare that my housekeeper is so incompetent.

How I tolerate you. You're a walking disaster. You're never prepared for anything. I have to do everything myself.

She throws her shawl at Hepzibah, hands her hat to a maid and disappears. Louisa hustles Violetta after her.

LOUISA

You boys are good at getting her to laugh. Go.

(brushing Anne's hair)

Anne... thank you.

YOUNG ANNE

I could have made it more flowery if

I'd had time to think it through. Wish she wasn't so inhospitable.

LOUISA

Well, she needs us here as much we need a place to stay.

YOUNG ANNE

I hope someone will always need me.

Louisa smiles and puts her hands on Anne's shoulders squarely.

LOUISA

We've got to get you a bath. If we are ever going to persuade Hepzibah to give you a place indoors.

Louisa and Young Anne hurry up to the house.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, OUTDOOR SHOWER -- EVENING65

Cold water abounds from a shower head as Hepzibah and her minions try to scrub Anne clean.

HEPZIBAH

You're the disaster. I've just had enough of your caterwauling and your shenanigans. You know what to do, ladies. Get her in there.

YOUNG ANNE

No! No! No! It's freezing!

She screams and hollers.

HEPZIBAH

You just behave yourself.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, PARLOR -- EVENING66

A lavish, over-stuffed parlor provides the rostrum for Amelia to lecture Louisa. Amelia picks up an evil looking Siamese cat, with piercing eyes.

AMELIA

Louisa. You have some queer ideas.

LOUISA

Her poor mother was such a gifted teacher; and the so child's incredibly bright, I thought that maybe she could help the children with their studies since they've missed so much school this year.

AMELIA

(sighing)

Oh, Louisa, you are so irresponsible.

VIOLETTA

I refuse to be taught by a stray!

Glowering back, Louisa succumbs to her hiccups.

LOUISA

I felt some responsibility to her Mother. Anne is well read and has a heart of gold.

VIOLETTA

She's very odd, if you ask me.

CONTINUED:66

Amelia hands the cat to Violetta, who despises the creature. She shoos it away.

LOUISA

I don't have it in me to send her to another Asylum.

AMELIA

You have a head and a heart as soft as my son's. I think I'll check and see if a local family needs some help.

Louisa nods with a final hiccup.

VIOLETTA

I can tutor the boys, Grandmother?

AMELIA

Your life is to be elevated above that of your parents. A girl's education begins with a proper governess. I have found one, she will be here right away. She will provide a firm hand. It will make all the difference in the world to you.

Violetta isn't so sure. Louisa grimaces at her to keep quiet. Violetta and Louisa leave.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

And now if you don't mind, I've had enough. Good-night.(picking up the cat)

My life will never be the same again.

Amelia stares at the portrait of her son on her desk, disconsolately.

EXT. THOMAS MANSION, STABLES -- MORNING67

Young Anne helps the GROOM bale hay for the horses. She spies an odd woman, RUTH BRIDGEWATER, approach the house.

Finding it difficult to contain her curiosity, she excuses herself.

YOUNG ANNE

Someone's left a pitcher of lemonade for the hired help. Want some?

GROOM

Sure, go get me some.

The Groom nods and Young Anne takes off to the summer kitchen.

EXT. THOMAS MANSION, SUMMER KITCHEN -- MORNING68

Young Anne proceeds to pour some lemonade. She sees Ruth, enter and sit on a bench inside the kitchen waiting to be met. Young Anne watches Ruth get up and quickly scan the area as if casing the house. She sees Ruth clock an open key cupboard. Ruth approaches the cupboard. Hepzibah arrives. Young Anne looks away, pretending to be studying a stuffed crow up on Hepzibah's cookbook shelf.

HEPZIBAH

Mrs. Thomas will see you now.

Ruth gets up and follows Hepzibah. They both notice Young Anne loitering out of curiosity.

HEPZIBAH (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

YOUNG ANNE

I was just looking at those crows up there

HEPZIBAH

You come back in here again and that crow will pick your eyes out! Go on, get out of here.

Young Anne scurries away with a glass of lemonade.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, STUDY -- DAY69

Ruth Bridgewater quietly reviews the mathematics notebooks of Violetta and the boys in an upstairs study.

RUTH

Alright, you can close your notebooks now. Your Grandmother asked to see all three of you for lunch. So, you can break now, while I mark your notebooks.

The children scurry off.

JOCK

That question was so hard.

RUTH

I know. The math quiz was so hard

Ruth gets up and looks around.

She enters the hall and checks a door to a staircase that is locked.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, STABLES -- DAY70

The Groom tidies up and locks the stable door. He hands a rusty ring of keys to Anne and saunters with two pails.

GROOM

Go and put these back in the key cupboard in the kitchen. Then come and help over at the pond well.

Young Anne hurries to the house obediently.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, KITCHEN -- DAY71

Young Anne obediently puts away the barn keys. A moment later Hepzibah locks the key cupboard. Then hesitates. She returns and checks inside. She sees one of the key-hooks marked "upstairs hall" is missing. Hepzibah fumes.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, STABLES -- AFTERNOON72

Louisa and Hepzibah have cornered Anne.

HEPZIBAH

They are missing as sure as the day is long. And I caught her loitering in the summer kitchen.

LOUISA

Did you notice a set of keys lying anywhere?

YOUNG ANNE

Y-e-e-s. I put away the stable keys in the cupboard not an hour ago.

HEPZIBAH

What business of it was yours! You don't meddle with my keys.

YOUNG ANNE

I did exactly as Mr. Adams told me.

He said put the keys in the cupboard then come and help me at the pond, which I did dutifully. Only I...

LOUISA

What Anne? Only what...?

Young Anne decides she better not say anymore.

HEPZIBAH

Only she likely mixed the stable with the missing keys and can't remember where she put them! Or worse than that, she stole them!!

Hepzibah twists her ear.

CONTINUED: (2)72

HEPZIBAH (CONT'D)

Didn't you steal them ya little sneak!

Young Anne nods out of fear and a desire for Hepzibah to stop. Louisa forces her to let go.

LOUISA

Hepzibah! Stop it! Anne did you touch any other set of keys?

YOUNG ANNE

Believe me..if I was led to the block for it, although I'm not certain what a block is, I never touched any other keys. Only the stable keys.

HEPZIBAH

I will not allow that child to sleep in here until she finds the upstairs key. She stays in the barn until she rots or hands back the upstairs keys.

Hepzibah slams the door shut. Louisa looks at her.

LOUISA

There's something else... Anne? What is it?

ANNE

Nothing.

Young Anne shakes her head and wanders back to the barn.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, STABLES -- NIGHT⁷³

Young Anne sleeps in the hayloft, listening to the owls hoot.

Bats fly over head. She cowers under an old carriage blanket.

EXT. THOMAS MANSION, STABLES -- MORNING⁷⁴

Hepzibah looms over Young Anne. She is forced to chop wood for the stove and haul pail after pail of water from the pond. Hepzibah trips young Anne, who looks up at her.

HEPZIBAH

Ready to tell me what happened to the missing keys?

Young Anne nods.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, PARLOR -- DAY⁷⁵

Young Anne stands in front of Ruth, Hepzibah, Louise and Amelia. Amelia's cat is ready to pounce at all the tension.

RUTH

That's preposterous Mrs. Thomas. I'm to be accused by a mischievous child who's never had an upbringing.

HEPZIBAH

Well she's having it now! This goes beyond a mere scolding ma'am.

Amelia takes Louisa into a corner.

AMELIA

Louisa, the child is a liar.

Young Anne steps forward to confront Amelia and Hepzibah.

YOUNG ANNE

I speak the truth because to be unjustly accused is an assault on my good name. My heart may be broken, but my one consolation is that someday you'll feel remorse for having crushed it.

Amelia is floored at Anne's brazen theatricality.

AMELIA

I'm setting my hand to the plough Louisa; The child will go to that Home in Fredricton.

Anne desperately tries to increase the emotional leverage once again, but her tack completely backfires.

YOUNG ANNE

You're a heartless woman. I'm sure your own poor son was driven to drink by your pushing him away.

Amelia may be astounded by the child's vocabulary, but she turns on her heel outraged. Turns to Louisa.

AMELIA

No, she did that.

Anne is surprised at the intensity of Amelia's reaction. She looks at Louisa.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Hepzibah, pack the child's bags.

Flowery indictments may have worked before, but his one has failed disastrously.

EXT. THOMAS MANSION, GARDENS -- DAY76

Young Anne is helped onto a Thomas Lumber wagon by Louisa.

LOUISA

I did my best dear, but working at the lumberyard will be much better than a Foundling Home.

YOUNG ANNE

Goodbye dear friend. I don't believe

God himself could do any better in the face of such an obstinate person.

Louisa has a lump in her throat as Young Anne rambles away.

INT. GREEN GABLES, MARILLA'S BEDROOM -- MORNING77

Anne is asleep at her desk in a dressing gown. She opens her eyes. She hears someone a pot downstairs. She gets up and hurries downstairs.

ANNE

Hellooo? Who is it?

INT. GREEN GABLES, KITCHEN -- MORNING78

Anne enters the kitchen to find Gene with his feet on the table, flipping through her manuscript. Anne stands in the doorway. He doesn't look up. He merely drags on a cigarette.

ANNE

You might have at least woken me, instead of breaking in.

GENE

The Real Estate agent from Avonlea was running around town telling people that she caught you talking to yourself in the yard.

ANNE

Real estate agents have no diplomacy.

GENE

I thought that was a good sign...maybe you have made some serious revisions.

Anne looks at him questioningly. She takes a deep breath.

GENE (CONT'D)

You've got something here. You finish by next week and I'll have time to do a cast read-through.

Anne smiles relieved. Gene gets up curtly and strides out through the screen door, onto the verandah, without a word.

EXT. GREEN GABLES, BACK VERANDAH -- MORNING⁷⁹

GENE (O.S.)

What got you going again?!

ANNE

A letter. From my father. Made me take the play in a different direction.

GENE

Father!? I always thought you were a stray.

Gene pauses at the "For Sale" smashed against the woodpile.

GENE (CONT'D)

You would never get what the place is worth anyway.

He smiles and waves without looking back, as he strides off.

INT. GREEN GABLES, MARILLA'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT80

Anne murmurs as she writes a letter by hand, in the lamplight.

ANNE (V.O.)

Forty years may have passed, but your letter finally arrived into my hand a week ago. I am hoping your return address is still valid. I don't know if you've ever come across my work but I am a well-published author and recently an aspiring playwright.

EXT. TOWN OF AVONLEA -- DAY81

Anne walks down the sidewalk of the hamlet. People wave, doff their hats and call to her as if she belonged to them.

ANNE (V.O.)

I still publish under my maiden name, Anne Shirley, even though I am a widow. I have two wonderful daughters who are all grown up with families of their own, and also, my adopted son who is still overseas. It's never been easy for me to put into words my feelings about you.

INT. AVONLEA POST OFFICE -- DAY82

Anne strides in. The Post-Mistress' eyes linger upon her from behind the wicket. She buys stamps, pauses then hands over the letter, with the conspicuous addressee. She throws away her small-town caution and hands the letter over.

ANNE (V.O.)

My memory of you has been somewhat rekindled in a play I am currently working on.

EXT. AVONLEA POST OFFICE -- DAY83

Anne closes the door and walks down the street.

ANNE (V.O.)

I hope we can arrange to finally meet. And that this letter actually gets to you. I suppose it's up to fate again. Your loving, Anne.

INT. GREEN GABLES, KITCHEN -- EVENING⁸⁴

Anne is sweeping the kitchen floor. She stops and looks up.

INT. THOMAS LUMBER MILL -- AFTERNOON⁸⁵

Young Anne sweeps the floors and tags the lumber with red tickets.

ANNE (V.O.)

In time, the Thomases forgot about me completely. My fear of being sent to an orphanage was replaced by the hardship of trying to survive in a lumber mill with people who couldn't have cared less about me.

INT. THOMAS LUMBER MILL -- NIGHT⁸⁶

Young Anne sleeps amidst a pile of sawdust on an old tick. She whispers to herself.

YOUNG ANNE

Katie...I miss you. I don't believe I'm long for this world. I pray I'll see you in the next...

ANNE (V.O.)

Mrs. Thomas was feared and disliked by all of her workers. I suppose it was her stubbornness that frustrated people most. Fortunately, I couldn't see how closely our lives would be tied together.

JEREMIAH LAND, the Manager, consults with his FOREMAN.

FOREMAN

I cancelled my orders because they're working slow. A lot of bickering amongst the men. An uproar has been brewing. They're threatening to go on strike because of unsafe conditions.

The Foreman nods and moves on.

(CONTINUED)

EXT. THOMAS LUMBER MILL -- NIGHT87

Several MASKED FIGURES try to tamper with the log chutes. A team of horses remove several supports from under the flume. One of the Figures opens the flood gates and lets the logs begin to shoot down through the flume in the darkness.

INT. THOMAS LUMBER MILL -- NIGHT88

Young Anne sleeps amidst a pile of sawdust on an old tick. A clanging triangle startles Young Anne out of her reverie.

She looks out the window and sees a log chutes has collapsed. There is wild, frenzied commotion. Men are screaming. The sabotage has backfired. Young Anne runs out onto the deck, leaving her bag.

EXT. THOMAS LUMBER MILL -- NIGHT89

Down below is a jumble of struts and braces.

FOREMAN

You thugs think you can terrorize management. Turn off the plume water! Close the gate!

Young Anne runs down the stairs to see what is going on. She stops the Foreman.

YOUNG ANNE

What's wrong?

FOREMAN

Buncha damn troublemakers! Tryin'a tamper with the chutes. Saying' they're unsage. And the two guilty ruffians are caught under it. Quick! Move!

Logs are pulled away. In the commotion A YOUTH is hauled from under a heavy flume. A hush falls over the men as he is carried out. A

MILLWORKER hollers at Young Anne, as he pushes the logs aside trying to create a hole.

MILLWORKER

Careful. Hey kid! Come here. We need you to climb in here. This guy's still movin'. Come here. Come on. You're little. You can get in there.

Young Anne is aghast. The Men start screaming and pelting rocks and logs at the Foreman. But the Millworker pushes the girl down into the hole.

MILLWORKER

Can you reach him? Come on, buddy.

YOUNG ANNE

Can you...can you lift up the beam?.

CONTINUED:89

Amidst the mayhem she and the Millworker are just able to free the victim.

MILLWORKER

Pull! Pull! Give us his arm. Good job, kid.

She is stunned once the Millworker helps the masked man out. His scarf comes off his head. Young Anne sees WALTER - her own father, and he is barely conscious. He doesn't see her. The Men cheer as they get him onto a makeshift stretcher. Suddenly the stretcher and Walter disappear as the Foreman and Jeremiah run to the scene.

Young Anne is severely rattled. She looks up and sees pockets of flames coming out of the Mill windows. Two other Figures wearing burlap masks jump onto a lorry. Suddenly the warehouse explodes!

MILLWORKER

My God, come on! Hurry! Hurry!

Astonished, Young Anne is swept off her feet by NELLIE on horseback.

NELLIE

Hey! Come on! Get on here!

EXT. MARYSVILLE, MILLROAD -- NIGHT90

Young Anne is terrified gazing up at the face masked in burlap. She recognizes the voice as that of Nellie.

NELLIE (CONT'D)

That man you rescued. That was Walter Shirley girl!

Anne looks blank.

NELLIE (CONT'D)

The one you rescued! I saw his arm was badly mangled, but he's safe.

Disoriented Young Anne merely nods, closing her eyes.

YOUNG ANNE

I know.

NELLIE

I'm taking you to the worker's cottage by the cider mill. You'll be safe there.

INT. MILLWORKER'S COTTAGE -- NIGHT91

Anne awakens in a homey bed with some other young children.

She hears men speaking in the adjoining room. They are sitting around a table. There is discussion about only small damage being done and the need to strike for improved conditions & wages.

MEN

No, no, no. I don't think so. Shh, quiet. What about the girl? We can't afford to have her go to the police.

Anne tiptoes across the room in the dark. She finds Walter bandaged. He cannot speak. She takes his hand. He tries to speak.

ANNE

I don't understand...I can't make out what you're saying

He is too weak. She lays her face on his hand. He wakes up and sees Anne.

INT. MARYSVILLE, MILLWORKERS' COTTAGE -- MORNING⁹²

A WOMAN wakes Young Anne up. The child finds her carpetbag with her books tucked neatly on a blanketbox at the end of the bed. She hears the men speaking in an adjoining room.

VARIOUS PEOPLE (O.S)

You were fools bringing in union organizers to help you -

What do you know -

What about the girl? -

You don't know what she knows - or who she's talkin' to...

WOMAN (O.S.)

Shush! That's enough now.

The Woman approaches Young Anne, taking her into the kitchen.

WOMAN

Some breakfast? What's your name?

She looks over and sees her father's bed empty.

ANNE

Cordelia.

WOMAN

Don't be shy, have a seat. You can stay and pick apples. We're here until September, then we move on to Maine. Penny a bushel. Lotsa other kids to

help, alright?

CONTINUED:92

Young Anne smiles in agreement.

ANNE

Yes Ma'am.

MAN (O.S.)

Let's go...Nellie Parkhurst says word she'll look after that one.

EXT. MARYSVILLE, ORCHARD, SUMMER -- DAY93

Anne picks apples with a group of children and hauls them into a cider press.

INT. MARYSVILLE, MILLWORKERS' COTTAGE -- NIGHT94

Anne sleeps soundly with several other children. She gazes up at the stars.

EXT. MARYSVILLE, ORCHARD, FALL -- AFTERNOON95

Young Anne is picking apples. She notices several of the PICKERS watching her. She doesn't speak to any of the other children. She continues her job nervously. Suddenly she notices Violetta, walking quickly through the orchard, accompanied by a 15 year old Boy. The Boy points and Violetta runs to Young Anne.

VIOLETTA

Anne! Anne! I wondered if we'd ever find you after all these weeks Anne! This is my friend Peter, from the smithy. Peter knew all about you working here now.

Young Anne nods as if they know each other.

VIOLETTA (CONT'D)

Mother was so concerned when you disappeared. Oh, Please come. We're desperate.

YOUNG ANNE

What's wrong Violetta?

Young Anne gets down from the ladder. Pickers are watching as she and Violetta leave.

EXT. MARYSVILLE, WOODS -- AFTERNOON96

Violetta takes Young Anne by the hand, walking briskly.

VIOLETTA

That stupid cat attacked Bridgewater.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, ATTIC -- DAY97

Ruth is putting old books in a satchel. The Siamese cat jumps on her and she bangs her head on the ceiling and collapses.

VIOLETTA (V.O.)

She was up to something in the attic, going through old papers. She claimed she was working on a history of the

County, but no one believes her. Grandmother fired her on the spot.

EXT. THOMAS MANSION, SUMMER KITCHEN -- DAY98

Violetta practically tosses the cat out the door in a blanket. The Cook is watching and runs to tell Hepzibah.

VIOLETTA (V.O.)

Then Hepzibah order me to put that vile thing outside for a few minutes, just to calm everyone down. But the stupid cat has been gone now for two days.

EXT. WOODS -- AFTERNOON99

The two girls hurry through a deep wood.

VIOLETTA

Mother's terrified we'll be thrown out forever, because we lost her contemptible cat.

YOUNG ANNE

That woman took the keys because she came for something.

VIOLETTA

Mother insisted to Grandmother that you weren't lying and that your suspicions about Bridgewater were true! Grandmother says you can come back and speak your mind, if you like.

YOUNG ANNE

But would she believe anything I had to say?!

VIOLETTA

Well she will now that a governess was found upstairs in the attic. This way. Come on.

YOUNG ANNE

No I don't think so...Violetta. Let's go back. I know this is the wrong way, Violetta.

Violetta stubbornly leads Young Anne deeper into the woods.

EXT. DEEP WOODS -- EVENING100

The light is starting to drop. The high spruce trees tower over them. Young Anne and Violetta trudge through the woods.

YOUNG ANNE

I feel as if there are faces watching us... white things behind the trees..

VIOLETTA

It's all in your imagination, Anne. Hepzibah goes on and on about the phantoms that kidnap little children no-one cares about.

YOUNG ANNE

I'd be the first to qualify...

VIOLETTA

It's this way. I know this road...

Violetta puts her foot on a log to take a stone from her shoe, when she is suddenly catapulted into the air by a trap that springs from the ground below her. Young Anne turns back to find Violetta ensnared in a net, hanging mid-air from a tree.

YOUNG ANNE

No. Nellie, help us!

VIOLETTA

Get me out! Get me out!

Despite cries from Violetta, Young Anne is suddenly snatched by Nellie on horseback, who disappears into the woods leaving a screaming Violetta to face an ACCOMPLICE.

EXT. OLD GRIST MILL -- EVENING101

Nellie gallops towards a dilapidated Old Mill on the edge of a stream, deep in the forest.

NELLIE (V.O.)

That trap's set so the Police don't get too close.

My friend'll get the girl loose.

EXT. OLD GRIST MILL -- EVENING102

Nellie takes off her hat and leads Young Anne onto the main floor of the Mill. Through an open door beyond, Young Anne gets a glimpse inside of an insurgent group of Men and Women workers. She clings to the door, too frightened to enter.

NELLIE

Come on in. This is our meetin' place. The Grist Mill's been abandoned for years. No one even knows I live here. The Thomases' imperial kitty! This is the feline what yer lookin' for?

Nellie pulls the Siamese Cat out of a cage. Anne gratefully *takes the smug animal into her arms. Nellie smiles warmly.

However, Anne notices Ruth Bridgewater through an open door inside the Mill. She pushes several documents across the* table. The group looks intensely interested.*

NELLIE (CONT'D)

Here. But don't dally at the
Thomases! Go back to the worker's
Cottage at the cider mill.

RUTH

What's she doin' here?

NELLIE (CONT'D)

You'll be plenty safe there! Go on, now. Go.
Anne anxiously nods and runs off.

NELLIE (CONT'D)

(under her breath)

There's worse in store for the Thomases than missing cats.

Nellie turns hands on hips to see the Men and Women in her kitchen have come to a decision. They shake hands with an important looking MAN (PHILIP GRAINGER) putting away papers in a brief.

RUTH

I found some correspondence in the old lady's files. Her husband knew full well he was lumbering on crown land for decades without any

deed...or timber rights. Somebody should put a stop to the whole operation.

GRAINGER

Or... have another company just take over the business for us completely.

RUTH

The town would be better off if she sold out.

CONTINUED:102

Grainger smiles.

GRAINGER

Thank you Mrs. Bridgewater.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, PARLOR -- EVENING103

Jeremiah Land consults with Mrs. Thomas.

JEREMIAH

The worker's attempts have been quelled by the police. A young man was killed and another seriously injured ma'am.

AMELIA

Why would they go to such lengths to ruin our business? Marysville was built on the bricks and mortar of my husband's good will.

JEREMIAH

But some people feel it isn't a woman's place to operate so many businesses.

AMELIA

That's what I pay you for, Jeremiah. To be effective too.

JEREMIAH

But, the death of that boy will be difficult to reverse... in workers' minds.

AMELIA

We will not be unionized Jeremiah.

Please. Now you return with more solutions not problems.

Amelia opens the parlor door. Jeremiah nods and quietly leaves. Amelia stares out the window. Anne hurries across the lawn with her precious cat!

EXT. THOMAS MANSION, GARDENS -- EVENING104

Amelia is ecstatic. She runs down the stairs as Anne proudly hands over her Siamese Cat. Amelia cuddles her pet. Violetta and Louisa and the boys come running after her.

VIOLETTA (O.S.)

Anne! You're back. Where did you find the cat?

VIOLETTA

Anne we thought you'd been roasted on a spit by bandits! Who was that woman that picked you up?

CONTINUED:104

LOUISA

They didn't hurt you did they?

Young Anne catches up.

YOUNG ANNE

I'm fine. They were only vagrants who live in the forest.

LOUISA

Vagrants?

AMELIA

I never expected to extend such a note of gratitude to such a saucy girl as you. They want you to stay. (to cat) Come my darling. Yes my precious.

Amelia looks at Louisa who puts her arm around Young Anne.

YOUNG ANNE

I am pleased to have returned your dear Blue Eyes to you.

LOUISA

Violetta told us you were taken hostage by armed riders!

ANNE

Not exactly...I did see something there. I saw Bridgewater at a meeting place with an unruly gang.

Hepzibah arrives too.

AMELIA

What were they doing?

ANNE

I couldn't tell. But they looked like they were discussing some papers.

AMELIA

Who took you there?

ANNE

Nellie Parkhurst. She found us and then she'd found the cat.

Hepzibah looks at Amelia and shakes her head.

HEPZIBAH

What a strange coincidence!

Amelia looks as if the bottom has dropped out of her. She suspects what is going on, as does Hepzibah. They turn, marching back to the house together, cradling her cat.

CONTINUED: (2)104

AMELIA

(to Hepzibah)

Well, if Bridgewater has taken something, we'll just simply have to tighten the reins in the future...

ANNE

Did a horse run away or something?

LOUISA

Grandmother sacked Bridgewater for nosing around in the attic. She's now admitted you were right Anne.

ANNE

But she seems terribly rattled.

VIOLETTA

Bridgewater came here with a purpose.

Because Grandmother hired her, based on a recommendation from a Bank.

LOUISA

Don't be so dramatic, Violetta. I'm sure nothing will come of this.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, SPARE ROOM -- NIGHT105

Anne rolls over in bed next to Violetta, her eyes brimming.

VIOLETTA

Why are you crying?

YOUNG ANNE

I'm so elated. To have your mother stick up for me so I can stay.

VIOLETTA

I take back the things I said about you, Anne. Mother says even your father's turned out to be a prince. He's written to her on occasion asking about you.

Young Anne is shocked, but she doesn't flinch.

VIOLETTA (CONT'D)

Have you not heard from him?

YOUNG ANNE

(covering)

Certainly. And I pray all the time we'll be together again someday.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, STUDY -- DAY106

Violetta and the boys work at their studies. Young Anne supervises their penmanship. She has all of Gabriel's frayed leather books lined up on a table with her open carpetbag.

JOCK

This is so dull.

KEITH

Don't you have anything better than books that are a hundred years old.

YOUNG ANNE

This poem is sheer romance.

VIOLETTA

It's ridiculous. You get away with making everyone think you're so much smarter than we are, just because you have a knack with fifty cent words.

YOUNG ANNE

I plan to teach one day and I regard you three as a personal experiment.

They all crumple pages and throw them at her.

YOUNG ANNE

This is outrageous. Wait until I tell your grandmother. If you want to fight about it, I have a better idea.

EXT. MARYSVILLE, RIVER -- DAY107

Young Anne lays a blanket and homemade helmet, spear and rifle on a raft. She hoists a sheet up a homemade mast.

YOUNG ANNE

On you go, Jock.

VIOLETTA

What's your point Anne? A soldier died and somebody writes a poem about it.

YOUNG ANNE

The only way you'll ever understand romantic verse is to live and breathe it. "Bingen on Rhine" is an illustrious poem you need to learn to relish.

Jock willingly lies down with spear and helmet on his chest.

YOUNG ANNE (CONT'D)

It's the type of masterpiece that just gives a crinkly feeling up and down your back.

CONTINUED:107

YOUNG ANNE (CONT'D)

'A soldier of the legion, lay dying in Algiers...

KEITH

You look really good, dead - Jock!

Young Anne begins to recite as Violetta and Jock push Keith into the river.

JOCK

I get all three of your desserts tonight for doing this!!

YOUNG ANNE

Lie down! You're supposed to be on your last breath! Now, everyone, push him off.

Young Anne and Keith cheer him on. Violetta rolls her eyes. Young Anne recites the touching story, with great melodrama in her voice, as she and the other two Thomas children run along the river bank.

YOUNG ANNE

'...the dying soldier faltered, as he took his comrades's hand. "I shall never see my native soil...,

KEITH

Lie down Jock!

YOUNG ANNE (CONT'D)

'...send me back to my native land.

Take a message to some distant friends of mine - for I was born at Bingen - Bingen on the Rhine'.

Suddenly the boat seems caught in an eddy and begins to twirl. Violetta looks at Young Anne concerned as she parades along the river, oblivious to reality. Keith is distracted pitching pebbles along the bank.

Jock sits up and the raft capsizes. The hereto sleepy current has picked up. Out of nowhere the raft begins to fall apart.

VIOLETTA

That blessed raft is falling apart!! We need to do something. Oh, snap out of it. We'll get help from the mill.

Violetta screams when Jock disappears and runs downstream toward the Mill. She entreats the Millworker to help.

VIOLETTA

Help please! My brother! He's on a raft...he can't swim. His raft is sinking! It's sinking! Help us, please!

CONTINUED: (2)107

Jock surfaces, trying to hold onto the raft in the rapid current.

JOCK

Help! Help!

The Millworker is a strong swimmer. He is able to hold his own in the flow. He reaches Jock And hauls him into the shore.

INT. THOMAS LUMBER MILL -- DAY108

Jock has a blanket around him. He is more shaken than cold.

Amelia shakes the Millworkers hand. A crowd of men cheer.

AMELIA

(with a twinkle)

My grandson owes you his life. You've saved the Thomases from extinction.

MILLWORKER (jokingly)

Well, I guess the name stays up over the door Mrs. Thomas!

Amelia catches the innuendo. She quickly rebuts.

AMELIA

Yes, it'd take more than a mere accident to remove our name...or a handful of disgruntled employees. Good day men.

The good humor in the situation falls flat as Amelia leaves. Louisa tries to awkwardly compensate.

LOUISA

Words can't express our gratitude.

Young Anne and Jock shake the Millworker's hand. Several workers whisper about the girl being tight with the Thomases.

YOUNG ANNE

Forgive us... .Forgive Me! For causing such a disaster. An angel must have been watching over all of us.

JOCK

Thanks, mister.

9EXT. THOMAS LUMBER MILL -- DAY109

Louisa corners Amelia.

LOUISA

Mrs. Thomas! It would be more prudent to listen to their concerns from time to time, rather than just the sound of your own voice.

AMELIA

The day I heed your advice Louisa, is the day you'll not need mine!

Amelia gets into her carriage leaving Louisa. Louisa shakes her head, embarrassed and frustrated. Changes needs to be made in the Thomas household and she is convinced of doing it.

EXT. MARYSVILLE, WINTER -- DAY110

Winter has arrived. The townsfolk host a skating party on the river. Outdoor cookouts are enjoyed alongside tobogganing and sleigh rides. Young Anne, Violetta and the boys play under the watchful eye of Amelia, who does her best to socialize with the townsfolk.

Louisa lingers behind, observant of the interrelationships. Young Anne seems to have found a way into her affections.

Amelia asks Anne to join in her in the sleigh. They swish past Louisa.

INT. CHURCH BALCONY, FREDRICTON -- NIGHT111

Young Anne's program reveals "The Maritime Symphony Tour, St. Andrews' Presbyterian Church Fredricton". Anne is better dressed. Louisa and Violetta enjoy the symphony concert, but the boys horseplay out of boredom. Young Anne nudges the boys to pay attention, but smiles fondly at Amelia.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, SPARE ROOM -- NIGHT112

Violetta and Young Anne fall exhausted into bed.

VIOLETTA

Hasn't Grandmother become a splendid creature recently? She's even allowed mother to study for a teacher's degree by mail.

YOUNG ANNE

I feel this marks an epoch in my life Violetta. Four months ago I was wishing I'd never been born; now I wouldn't change places with an angel!

CONTINUED:112

Young Anne snuggles in the bed.

YOUNG ANNE (CONT'D)

The best of all is coming here again. Just so happy your Grandmother finally understands I'm a human being.

Amelia stands by the door listening to the girls. A tenderness crosses her face that reveals itself only in shadow. Young Anne closes her eyes.

INT. WHITE SANDS HOTEL THEATER -- NIGHT113

Anne opens her eyes. She is sitting in the empty theater of the Hotel in complete darkness. Gene sits two rows in front of her listening to the read-through.

Two ACTORS are onstage in casual clothes.

MALE ACTOR (O.S.)

Hey, I'm just glad your grandmother understands I'm a human being.

FEMALE ACTOR (O.S.)

There is no darkness anymore only light.

The Female Actor looks at the Male Actor then runs offstage.

Anne sits frozen, awaiting Gene's reaction during the lengthy pause. Gene begins to clap at first slowly, then heartily.

The ENTIRE CAST comes back onstage in jeans. Anne closes her eyes in relief.

GENE

Thank you everyone. Take five. It's alright, dialogue needs cutting. Go back to work.

INT. GREEN GABLES, KITCHEN -- NIGHT114

Anne types away furiously. Gene looks over shoulder, then steals away out the screen door, so as not to interrupt her.

EXT. GREEN GABLES, FIELDS -- DAY115

Anne walks through the fields, speaking to herself as if she is playing several parts in her play. She sees a POSTMAN come riding across the fields on his bicycle. He is waving. Anne halts, praying a letter from her father is imminent. She races across the field, stumbling.

POSTMAN

Morning.

ANNE

Hey Mack! Anything new from New Brunswick?

The Postman shakes his head. He squints at the envelope.

POSTMAN

Paris, France!

Anne's heart stops. She pelts across the hill, struggling to catch her breath.

INT. WHITE SANDS HOTEL -- DAY116

Anne is on the telephone, shouting into the receiver, excitedly waving a letter.

Anne watches the Actors dragging their luggage out of the Hotel into a bus, parked outside.

ANNE

Please, I'm begging you to come Diana!

(pause)

I'm shaking that's why. I'm holding a letter from Dominic. He's coming home! Oh please ... come and bring everyone.

(pause)

I'm exhausted and exhilarated. Gene

Previewing the play in New Jersey and if it's any success at all I'm going to use the royalties to renovate Green Gables.

Oh honey, I have to go.

I love you too Diana. Bye bye.

Anne hang up the phone. She closes her eyes.

INT. LONG WHARF THEATER BACKSTAGE, NEW HAVEN --
EVENING117

Anne opens her eyes in the dark. She paces back and forth in the balcony, observing the audience's reaction; chewing on a hangnail as the finale arrives.

As always, sitting calm and collected, Gene observes Anne.

His SUMMER CAST takes curtain call. Anne holds her breath.

The applause is liberating. Anne doesn't know where to look.

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CONTINUED: 117

GENE

Come on.

Gene escorts her on stage. Gene puts his arm around her.

Anne holds Gene's hand, terrified at the overwhelming reaction.

Anne is brought to centre stage. The audience applauds.

INT. GREEN GABLES, MARILLA'S BEDROOM -- DAY: 118

ANNE (V.O.)

Dearest father - I received the note from your housekeeper saying that she'd given you my latest letter and that a reply from you would be forthcoming. I am anxious to hear from you. Your daughter, Anne.

EXT. WHITE SANDS BEACH -- AFTERNOON119

The day is grey and cloudy. Anne waves. Gene approaches Anne sitting gloomy and uncertain by a smoldering fire on the beach.

GENE

The box office in New Jersey surpassed everybody's expectations. Congratulations.

ANNE

What if we got a shot at Broadway?

GENE

Broadway? Who needs Broadway? Be happy we got into New Jersey. No, my feet are firmly planted right here. I wouldn't leave summer theater if you paid me.

EXT. BARRY'S POND -- EVENING120

Gene and Anne stroll across Anne's favorite bridge. Mist is starting to rise off the water. The wind purrs softly in the aspen trees.

GENE

What is it?

ANNE

I don't know. Everything is in its right place. Dominic is getting married. I've finally managed to put something down on paper that was worthwhile. But I feel...

(sighs)
...empty.

CONTINUED:120

GENE

Why?

Anne stops and leans over the bridge. She concurs.

ANNE

I've never heard from him again...and I've written several times now.

Anne's despair is written all over her face. She stares into the watery depths, rippling around the pilings under the bridge.

GENE (O.S.)

What really happened with your father that you were so reluctant to talk about?

EXT. THOMAS MANSION, GARDENS - SPRING -- DAY121

Young Anne stares into the water rippling in the pond. Jock finishes his spelling. He pokes Anne, handing her his book.

JOCK

Aren't you supposed to check my spelling?

Young Anne snaps out of her reverie.

YOUNG ANNE

Of course I will. Jock you're supposed to write the words out three times each.

JOCK

Sorry. It's more boring than algebra.

VIOLETTA

Boys, get to work. Here she comes.

Louisa corrects Keith's algebra. Mathematics and spelling books are closed up as Amelia allows a formal lunch to be served in the garden by her retinue, on a sunny, breezy day.

AMELIA

Children! Time for a break! I'm so pleased with all the progress you've been making with your studies Louisa. You're all to be commended.

YOUNG ANNE

We could be even more model children if we were allowed to dine outside everyday.

Amelia laughs. She pats Young Anne's back.

CONTINUED:121

AMELIA

And to think, I thought Louisa was a nitwit for arriving on my doorstep with a stray child; I was wrong.

Louisa smiles.

LOUISA

We're all very grateful for your hospitality Mrs. Thomas.

Amelia sees Jeremiah coming up the driveway.

JEREMIAH

Excuse me, Mrs. Thomas. Sorry to interrupt, but I need to speak with you.

AMELIA

Speak.

A cloud passes over her face. She quietly excuses herself.

Louisa tries to divert the children's attention.

LOUISA (CONT'D)

Violetta, go and help Hepzibah put the chicken salad on the plates. so it doesn't spoil while we wait for grandmother to come back.

VIOLETTA

Why do I always have to do this? The boys never have to do anything.

LOUISA

Boys, help clear up the dishes. Careful. Come.

The children comply and Young Anne starts to help. With one eye on Amelia, Louisa escorts her aside, passing her a note. Young Anne opens the note.

YOUNG ANNE

I am safe and doing so much better.

Nellie Parkhurst is helping me get organized to come back to Marysville. I want you to do everything she asks. It won't be long before I can come back for you too. Your loving father, Walter.

Anne is flabbergasted.

YOUNG ANNE

How?

CONTINUED: (2)121

LOUISA

Last fall in St. John. I went to write the teacher's board exam. He was just out of the hospital. He saw me on the street and called to me. We've corresponded ever since.

YOUNG ANNE

But you vowed you'll have nothing more to do with him...

LOUISA

I misjudged him Anne. Your father is a good man. He is much reformed.

Louisa escorts her to an isolated bench in the garden. She carefully observes the conversation with Jeremiah and Amelia.

LOUISA (CONT'D)

He's involved with this company; New Hampshire Timber and Plank. They're going to help Grandmother. And he's going to help all the workers keep their jobs or get new ones if the Mills are sold.

YOUNG ANNE

Does Mrs. Thomas know?

LOUISA

The Banks are behind it. They want her to sell.

YOUNG ANNE

It... sounds so insidious.

LOUISA

Grandmother's never cared much for anybody but herself. She only values people who are of service to her or amuse her. Your enthusiasm is a tonic. You can Influence her.

YOUNG ANNE

To do what?

LOUISA

Sell, retire and leave Marysville.

Young Anne swallows; worried at the outcome of even trying to influence such a monumental decision.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, PARLOR -- DAY122

Amelia stares out the window at Louisa chatting with young Anne. Her back is to Jeremiah, as she absorbs his discourse.

JEREMIAH

That price drop put an end to shipping to the States. The Cotton Mill will simply drag down the other Mills.

If you don't shut down the Cotton Mill immediately, we can't pay the mortgage to the Abbey Bank or the other mills. I'm just concerned about the bank; they're pushing you to sell out.

Amelia nods, signs the paper work and looks back at Jeremiah with concern. She leaves, planning her next move.

EXT. THOMAS MANSION, GARDENS -- AFTERNOON¹²³

Louisa takes young Anne back to lunch and they sit down.

LOUISA

We have to help her make the right decision for everyone; including us. If we're ever going to leave here. You can convince her to retire.

Young Anne isn't so sure. Amelia joins the group, keeping up a carefree front.

AMELIA

Everyone, I've come to a very important decision. I've decided to host a picnic next week, for the town and some important visitors!

Louisa nods at Young Anne, nudging her. Young Anne explodes like a nervous chatterbox.

YOUNG ANNE

A picnic! Oh this can't be real. I'm so excited I could faint! I'd love to be able to really faint. It's so romantic. Violetta will you wear that new dress with elbow sleeves to the picnic? Mrs. Thomas, are you sure the weather will be good for a picnic next week? If anything ever happened it would be a lifelong sorrow for everyone. The entire town will be beside itself if they are half as fluttered as me. Someday I'd like to retire.

Looking forward to things is half the pleasure of them though, don't you think? Will you have boats? And ice cream? Ice cream is one of those treats that sounds sublime, even though I've never truly had it.

CONTINUED:123

Amelia loses it and slams her fist on the table.

AMELIA

Anne Shirley what mental anguish has consumed you? You've prattled on for five minutes. Hold your tongue for an equal amount of time!

Amelia gets up and walks around the table planning the next move in her mind, to aid Louisa.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

We will be serving ice cream. With lady fingers! You and Violetta will work with Hepzibah and select the luncheon menu. The boys will be in charge of the decorations: there will be buntings and flags. Louisa, I need you to look into the invitations. I have several callers from the Abbey Bank I think you'll need you to contact them. This will be a company celebration the town will never forget; and it will certainly bolster assurance about Thomas Mills!

EXT. COTTON MILL -- EVENING124

MALE and FEMALE EMPLOYEES read their slips of paper as they depart from the Cotton Mill. One WOMAN is in tears. Most are stone-faced.

INT. COTTON MILL -- EVENING125

From a gallery, Jeremiah walks past the rows of empty looms on the main floor below him. A few employees straggle out. He chains the office door with a lock.

AIN'T. SPARE ROOM -- DAY125A

Louisa casually leaves the book on the desk in the bedroom for Anne. Anne understands what she is doing. She opens the book and finds the note from her father inside at a marked page. She glances at the letter, trying to take it all in.

Hepzibah stands in the hallway, spying on Anne. Anne closes the book and pockets the notice.

HEPZIBAH

Get downstairs child and help with the party things. I don't care for children who don't know how to work.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, KITCHEN -- EVENING126

Young Anne is helping Violetta and Hepzibah set out the tea service. She takes her apron off and drapes it on the back of the chair.

YOUNG ANNE

This is the last tea service to be polished.

The bell to the study rings. Anne jumps at it.

YOUNG ANNE

I'm happy to go see what she'd like.

Hepzibah nods. Violetta is preoccupied with counting silverware.

HEPZIBAH

Just a minute, take off that apron. Come on, quickly, hurry up, she's waiting for you. You don't see Mrs. Thomas with an apron on. Now put it over the chair. Now, hurry, quickly, off you go

Young Anne leaves her apron behind. Hepzibah picks it up and discovers the note from Walter in her pocket.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, STUDY -- EVENING127

Mrs. Thomas is sitting by a fire. She gets up feeling dizzy, feeling her pulse. She pours herself some water, but suddenly drops the glass on the floor. The glass shatters. She partly collapses with angina. Catching her breath she struggles over to the desk and manages to find a small jar in the drear.

Shaking she administers a couple of tablets, swallows and Manages to catch her breath.

Young Anne comes skipping into the room. She stops cold seeing the broken glass and finding Amelia turned ashen grey.

AMELIA

Fetch me... fetch me some whiskey, quickly. Over there

Without a word young Anne proceeds to a liquor cabinet and pours a dose of spirits. She helps the tumbler to Amelia's lips. Amelia is perspiring, drenched in a cold sweat.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Oh Anne... I've had such a fright.

YOUNG ANNE

I'll fetch you a doctor! Louisa! Hepzibah!

CONTINUED:127

AMELIA

No...no. No doctor. That's enough. You tell no-one about this. I want you to swear that you will tell no-one about this. No-one.

YOUNG ANNE

It's quite wicked to swear.

AMELIA

It's not wicked to swear if you do it aid someone you care about.

Young Anne becomes as emotional as Mrs. Thomas points to a decanter on the bookcase. Young Anne obliges and pours some of the amber-colored mixture, then holds it to Amelia's lips.

YOUNG ANNE

Oh Mrs. Thomas I knew you liked me but... . I... never presumed you cared about me. Oh I do swear. I swear to never reveal this moment to a soul.

Amelia sips the whiskey again and tries to rally.

AMELIA

Thank you.

YOUNG ANNE

On pain or death, I remain your loyal confidant.

AMELIA

Good. Now, you run and you finish with Hepzibah in the kitchen...

Anne begins to walk away, but Amelia grabs her back.

AMELIA

...no, come, come.

Young Anne hugs Amelia.

AMELIA

Alright, I feel better now.

Hepzibah lurks in the shadows watching through the open door, then disappears.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, SUMMER KITCHEN -- NIGHT128

Violetta finishes up writing the menu.

VIOLETTA

It will be so exciting to be sit at the table and serve tea for all the important guests. Don't you think so Hepzibah?

HEPZIBAH

You won't have such a high opinion of it when you've served as many as I have, nor lived as long. Off you go, your mother's calling.

Young Anne enters looking shell-shocked.

YOUNG ANNE

What would you like me to do next?

VIOLETTA

I've got it all organized for you Anne!

Young Anne nods and smiles. She sits at the table lost in thought, her face in her hands. Hepzibah approaches anxiously.

HEPZIBAH

Don't fool yourself into thinking you have the missus all sewed up.

Young Anne turns.

YOUNG ANNE

What do you mean?

HEPZIBAH

You're no better than the child of a common swindler.

Young Anne stands her ground, but terrified of the truth.

YOUNG ANNE

How dare you!

Hepzibah leans in towards the girl.

HEPZIBAH

How dare you try your wheedling ways on Mrs. Thomas. It will crush her when she discovers the truth...

CONTINUED:128

She pushes Young Anne, who is now terrified of the woman.

HEPZIBAH (CONT'D)

That your father is a union instigator, known to Police. And him in touch with you...

She pulls out the letter from Walter and holds it out.

HEPZIBAH (CONT'D)

It will get out. Things always get out in Marysville. You're just full of original sin. You aren't fit to call this house your home.

Young Anne breaks down and runs out the kitchen door.

EXT. THOMAS MANSION, GARDENS -- EVENING129

Young Anne runs from the summer kitchen and across the gardens into the woods. The sky rumbles and turns dark.

INT. MARYSVILLE, WOODS -- NIGHT130

Young Anne runs through the forest in the pelting rain. She makes her way past the trap.

EXT. OLD GRIST MILL -- NIGHT131

Young Anne slides through a deluge of rain. She arrives at the Mill and barges through the door, wet and whimpering.

NELLIE

Come in.

INT. OLD GRIST MILL -- NIGHT132

Nellie dries Young Anne out before a stove.

NELLIE

She's a tartar that Hepzibah.

YOUNG ANNE (shivering)

A woman born to scrub floors shouldn't take such mean advantage, especially when I was trying so hard to fit in. She said I was full of

original sin.

The girl's feelings are ragged. Nellie stirs the fire.

NELLIE

You got a knack for trouble and it ain't easy bein' different, I'll give you that. Look at me. Lost my baby and my husband years ago. Can't cry about it now.

CONTINUED:132

Nellie pats Anne on the back. Young Anne feels an overwhelming sadness for this creature.

YOUNG ANNE

You don't miss belonging to someone?

NELLIE

I belong to the community here. The town is my family. Except for Mrs. Thomas is a stubborn fool...

YOUNG ANNE

She's not half the monster people think she is.

Young Anne can see disagreement written all over Nellie's face. She realizes she could come to blows with her over the subject of Amelia.

NELLIE

People stick by each other here.

It's a fine community. A Union can force her to sell to someone bigger and stronger, before she goes bust.

Young Anne is frightened. Nellie smiles, realizing the child's point.

NELLIE

Controlling things in her way destroyed a lot of what was good here.

Young Anne tries to understand.

NELLIE (CONT'D)

She'd like to see the town finally fail.

YOUNG ANNE

No she wouldn't! She's in dire straits herself! The bank is forcing...

Young Anne stops herself.

NELLIE

I don't know much about banks.

There is an awkward silence. Nellie stares at Young Anne, who is holding back, nervous at what has been revealed in their conversation. Nellie gets up to change the subject.

NELLIE (CONT'D)

Weather's turn.

Nellie goes to the window.

CONTINUED: (2)132

NELLIE (CONT'D)

This town is a good place for you to belong to. You could settle down with your Pa. Live a long life here. Despite all their money the Thomases never been very decent.

Young Anne's sense of allegiance is severely tested. She is frightened, but she politely offers Nellie her hand. Nellie offers her a lantern to go back with.

YOUNG ANNE

Thank you. Please tell my father I am in kind and caring hands and not to worry about me.

Young Anne holds her ground. Nellie smiles. Young Anne turns and quickly leaves to run back to the Thomases, through the shadows. Nellie is concerned.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, SPARE ROOM -- NIGHT133

Young Anne lies in bed asleep, beside Violetta. Amelia steals into the room. She tries to wake her. She is awake.

AMELIA

Whatever made you run away like that? I was worried!

YOUNG ANNE

I was afraid...

AMELIA

Of me?

Young Anne hesitates, then shakes her head.

YOUNG ANNE

I was frightened... maybe you'd change your mind, about me staying.

AMELIA

Why?

YOUNG ANNE

I'm such an unlucky girl. Always getting myself into scrapes and getting my friends - people I'd shed my life's blood for - into them too.

AMELIA

You certainly said something that made Hepzibah very cross. What was it?

CONTINUED:133

YOUNG ANNE

I was wrong to run away Mrs. Thomas. You are a true kindred spirit.

AMELIA

A what?

YOUNG ANNE

A Kindred Spirit. Someone you can rely on right to your innermost soul.

AMELIA

Go back to sleep.

Amelia smiles. Young Anne smiles back and turns over. She closes her eyes, uncertain still about what Hepzibah may do. Amelia watches her for a moment, then steals out of the room.

EXT. THOMAS MANSION, GARDENS -- DAY134

A garden party unfolds in the mellow sunshine. Bees hum amidst a bowery wilderness of flowers. The multitude of townsfolk and assorted guests are thrilled by the splendid assortment of edible delights, silverware, starched linen, tents and bunting. Amelia and firm have created a dazzling impression, that may also be the calm before the storm.

Amelia addresses the crowd.

AMELIA

It's unfortunate that economic circumstances have forced the closure of our prized cotton mill. Lumber and cider are resilient businesses with a bright future. I wanted to take this afternoon to thank so many of you who have been dedicated to the Thomas Mills...and to helping me personally during this time, at filling my husband's shoes.

There are obscure looks amongst a number of townsfolk. Most try to put on a good face.

AMELIA

I'd be very pleased to meet each of you if you'd be kind enough to join me for tea in the garden.

Violetta is pouring tea. Amelia shakes hands and introduces Anne and her grandsons. Anne notices Amelia glance guardedly at a certain gentleman, PHILIP GRAINGER, entering the garden with several men. There is a general commotion as Jeremiah speaks to the workers, then appears quickly at Amelia's arm.

CONTINUED:134

JEREMIAH

Excuse me Mrs. Thomas. The bank asked a guest. Let's put our best foot forward.

Amelia looks at him suspiciously.

AMELIA

Speak for yourself.

He walks ahead to greet the men. Young Anne whispers to Amelia as she breezes by.

YOUNG ANNE

Mr. Land looks as if he's being led to the gallows Mrs. Thomas.

AMELIA

It's all in his head. He's intimidated by bankers. I don't see the use of meeting trouble half-way.

I'm not here to entertain bullies.

Amelia squeezes the girl's arm as she follows Jeremiah and introduces herself to Philip Grainger and group.

JEREMIAH

Mrs. Thomas, you know Mr. Grainger.

AMELIA

Welcome.

GRAINGER

Mrs. Thomas, this is Alan Laing from New Hampshire Timber and Plank.

AMELIA

Oh yes, Mr. Laing.

LAING

Thanks for having me. I am pleased to see such an enthusiastic throng Mrs. Thomas, with all the rumblings.

The boys take off to play with several of the town-boys.

Young Anne moves past the business group to Violetta at tea.

AMELIA (O.S.)

'You can believe half of what you see and none of what you hear'. The Abbey Bank has a vested interest in Union talk as I perceive it.

A chill settles over the group of men.

CONTINUED: (2)134

GRAINGER

The Bank has to address financial burden head on. We're concerned that your mortgage payments have lapsed.

Young Anne holds a cup out for Violetta to pour tea.

YOUNG ANNE

Is this the correct way to balance a cup? I'm not well-versed in the rules of etiquette.

Violetta stops pouring and stares beyond Young Anne.

VIOLETTA

Anne!

She turns around. Her father Walter is standing a yard behind her leaning on a cane. He is well-dressed and handsome in a suit. Young Anne is speechless. Violetta's mouth is open.

WALTER

Is there a quiet spot?

Young Anne looks into his eyes completely dazed. He leads her to a bench in a secluded part of the garden. He walks with a limp. He sits down with stiffness.

WALTER (CONT'D)

Louisa has told me how helpful you've been in softening up Mrs. Thomas.

He looks around cautiously. Louisa exchanges a smile with Walter, but keeps to the group. The child is unsure what is going on. She stares at his hand, realizing that it has been replaced by a hook.

WALTER (CONT'D)

I can't speak for long, but if this deal comes through many men can keep their jobs and the town will carry on. I intend to do very well out of it. Hepzibah observes them from a distance. Walter notices her watching. Hepzibah turns and approaches Amelia. Hepzibah briskly takes Amelia aside to show her a note.

HEPZIBAH

I found this in the pocket of Anne's apron yesterday. And there they are over there. Look.

Walter takes Young Anne's hand.

CONTINUED: (3)134

ANNE

Why do you have to be like this?

Amelia is frozen, when she sees Anne with Walter and comes to the quick realization of what is going on. Amelia directs Hepzibah to get

Walter off her property.

AMELIA

Whatever it takes, do it.

HEPZIBAH

I will do it.

Amelia turns away and marches over to Jeremiah. She takes his arm as he stands chatting with Grainger and Laing. Young Anne is shocked at Hepzibah's rudeness, but she also

Sees Amelia curtly shake hands with Grainger and his New Hampshire buyer. Amelia leaves the festivities unceremoniously. Jeremiah makes his excuses and follows suit. Once out of earshot, Amelia lights into him.

AMELIA

(to Mr. Grainger and Mr. Laing)

Thank you very much.

(to Jeremiah)

Come with me, Jeremiah. Of all the cunning, and manipulative tricks, to use a child as a go-between and having the audacity to do it on the front lawn of my own home.

Amelia pauses to see Hepzibah throw a final nasty remark at Walter, by the gate. Walter stares her down. Hepzibah takes Young Anne by the arm and escorts her back into the party.

JEREMIAH

You're being too guarded.

AMELIA

Am I? They certainly had the inside track on all of our discussions, didn't they Jeremiah. What did you tell them?

Jeremiah is tongue-tied.

JEREMIAH

Nothing but listening to an excellent offer for timber rights that could solve virtually all our issues.

CONTINUED: (4)134

AMELIA

Jeremiah, you've worked for me for fifteen years and we've never crossed words. So I'll give you the benefit of the doubt. But listen to me fully. As sure as I stand here now, I will close all my Mills down before I sell... or even toss one morsel to those vultures, do you understand me?.

Amelia glances back to see Hepzibah rudely remove the girl from the discussion with her father in a diatribe of foul words, that prove to be effective.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, PARLOR -- DAY135

Amelia is at her desk writing a letter. Young Anne knocks on the door. Amelia turns back and stares. Young Anne enters cautiously, looking as if she has been crying.

YOUNG ANNE

Hepzibah explained to me how those people wanted to use me. Stars in their courses fight against me. But if you must be cross with anyone...be cross with me.

AMELIA

Don't fret, dear. I'm sure everything will turn out alright in the end.

YOUNG ANNE

But, what if you are forced to give it all away to the Bank?

AMELIA

No one's ever forced to do anything. It's not in my nature.

YOUNG ANNE

I'm used to having people cross at me, but Hepzibah said such merciless things that night. I ran away to

Nellie's... to talk to her about everything I'd found out.

Anne bursts into a torrent of emotion. Amelia is stern.

AMELIA

You're just so heedless and impulsive.

ANNE

I was terrified you'd throw me out if you find out about my father. You have to believe me because I -

CONTINUED:135

AMELIA

You never stop to think. Anything that pops into your head, you leap on it. You don't give it one minute's reflection!

YOUNG ANNE

I know I'm culpable. But imagine the horror of finding out what my father has been involved in.

Amelia softens.

YOUNG ANNE (CONT'D)

An iron entered my soul at that very moment... Hepzibah made me feel like a worthless traitor. I would never go against you.

Amelia cups the child's remorseful face in her hands.

AMELIA

Come. Grown-ups can take advantage of a child's innocent heart. Even this father of yours. You must not trust everyone, all the time. You have a new home...here now. I know that Louisa wants you to stay with us.

Young Anne blinks, not believing what she has just heard.

YOUNG ANNE

Say it again. Say it again. It's a ray of hope on a path of darkness.

Amelia's eyes brim with emotion.

AMELIA

And I want you to stay too.

Young Anne buries her face in Amelia's arms.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, SUMMER KITCHEN -- MORNING136

Hepzibah and Louisa are in a dispute.

LOUISA

Amelia Thomas is reckless not to sell. This company can build the community in a way she is incapable of.

HEPZIBAH

You fault her for her determination?

LOUISA

This opportunity will never happen again.

Please Hepzibah...just speak to her to at least prolong discussions with them.

CONTINUED:136

HEPZIBAH

I have just one retort for the lot of you. Judas Priests!

She spits on the floor and walks away. Louisa is astounded as Hepzibah steals away.

EXT. THOMAS MANSION, GARDENS -- MORNING137

The sun is barely above the horizon. The grounds are silent; covered in dew. Louisa surreptitiously hurries out the door.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, STUDY -- MORNING138

From the edge of a curtain, Amelia watches Louisa hurry across the lawn and into the woods.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, SUMMER KITCHEN -- MORNING139

Young Anne is washing vegetables and fruit with the kitchen staff. Hepzibah exchanges a look with Amelia as she enters the kitchen. Amelia approaches the child.

AMELIA

Anne, step outside with me for just a moment, dear.

EXT. THOMAS MANSION, GARDENS -- MORNING140

Amelia takes Young Anne's hand.

AMELIA

Now, I need to know where the rabble-rousers that you saw, meet. Show me. Show me!

Young Anne is disturbed by Amelia's panic. Amelia takes Young Anne forcibly, hurrying across the garden and into the forest.

EXT. OLD GRIST MILL -- MORNING141

They stop by the river at the Mill. Young Anne looks at Amelia. She is in a fury. They cross the bridge.

INT. OLD GRIST MILL -- MORNING142

Louisa and Walter sit beside each other at the corner of the Table.

Amelia pushes open the door. She discovers Nellie, Louisa and Walter sitting at a table as though working out a plan.

Amelia puts her hand over Anne's eyes. Louisa and Walter look up at Amelia full of guilt. Amelia pulls the child away.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, PARLOR -- DAY143

Louisa pleads with Amelia.

AMELIA

I expect you to vacate my home immediately.

LOUISA

I didn't expect to remain. I only hoped you'd seize this opportunity to put your stubborn pride aside for once.

AMELIA

(sniffing)

You're a pathetic judge of human nature.

Louisa deflates, resigned to her own fate, but determined to retain her dignity.

LOUISA (CONT'D)

I...I will survive. I will get a job as a teacher. And I will support my family.

Amelia looks away, out the window. Louisa turns.

LOUISA (CONT'D)

...and I'm taking Anne.

Amelia doesn't flinch. Louisa closes the door.

INT. HALLWAY -- DAY144

As Louisa locks the door, she hears Amelia cry out. Louisa pauses, thinking she should go back, but she leaves.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, SPARE ROOM -- NIGHT145

The boys and Violetta pack their luggage. Anne's carpetbag is untouched at the foot of their bed. She stands staring at the moon on the balcony off the spare room.

VIOLETTA

Aren't you packing Anne?

ANNE

Just gazing at the lawn. I will be haunted by the fact of leaving here, forever and ever.

Anne hears a call from the lawn.

NELLIE

(calls from the woods)

Anne!

CONTINUED:145

ANNE

Louisa!

Louisa comes running onto the balcony, hearing voices.

NELLIE

(calls from the woods)

Over here? Your Pa's in a spot Anne.

LOUISA

What's wrong!

NELLIE

He's in serious trouble with the company. They've thrown him in jail for trying to double cross the bank.

LOUISA

But he was to help us leave.

NELLIE

I can take you to St. John.

Anne runs away and out of the room.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, HALLWAY -- NIGHT146

Anne runs down the stairs.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, PARLOR -- NIGHT147

Jeremiah Land has presented a letter from the Bank to Amelia. It describes a foreclosing on the Mills and forcing the company to declare bankruptcy.

JEREMIAH

This is a very typical kind of demand,

Mrs. Thomas. The foreclosure is merely a Bank tactic. We can still try to close a deal with New Hampshire Timber.

Amelia is silent.

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)

But I need to see the deeds. It isn't true what they imply here about the land rights?

AMELIA

We've been chopping down trees on crown property with no land-rights for twenty years. There's nothing to sell Jeremiah!

CONTINUED:148

Amelia looks crazed. Jeremiah is inarticulate.

JEREMIAH

The company has nothing. That's just not possible...

AMELIA

My husband was too clever for his own good.

Amelia darts out of the room. Young Anne stops, listening at the foot of the stairs. Amelia can't speak. She runs out of the house. Young Anne runs after her in her nightgown.

EXT. THOMAS MANSION, GARDENS -- NIGHT149

Young Anne catches up to Amelia.

YOUNG ANNE

Mrs. Thomas! Mrs. Thomas! Mrs. Thomas! Mrs. Thomas! I'm not leaving. I give you my word.

AMELIA

Alright, my dear. Come on now, you go back inside. Come on.

YOUNG ANNE

I want to stay with you!

AMELIA

I know you do, and it's alright. There is more nothing to do. You just have to pray. And listen, no more tears. No tears. Promise me.

Young Anne stands her ground.

YOUNG ANNE

Let me go with you.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Promise me no more tears. Go on. It's alright.

Amelia runs through the garden and down to the town. Jeremiah comes out of the house after her. He hurries past Anne.

INT. THOMAS MANSION, SPARE ROOM -- NIGHT150

Violetta and Young Anne lie in bed. Violetta is asleep.

Young Anne is awake. She sees Louisa through a partly open door, packing up the boys' room.

Young Anne gets up and is drawn by a vague flickering light through the curtains. She goes to the balcony. As she gets closer she realizes what the light is. She sees the blaze from the Mills. On fire!

YOUNG ANNE

Louisa! Louisa! Come quickly.

Louisa enters the room.

LOUISA

What's wrong?

Louisa is stupefied.

LOUISA (CONT'D)

Oh my dear lord!

ANNE

She's heading into town after supper.

Louisa looks at Young Anne, then runs from the room calling.

LOUISA

Mrs. Thomas! Mrs. Thomas!!

Young Anne hears Louisa banging on a door. She tries to ponder what is really going on. She stares out the window immobile, as she witnesses an explosion. The Lumber Mills are in flames.

ANNE (V.O.)

Some people said it was Mrs. Thomas who destroyed her own mills. Others said it started as an accident when a fight broke out between the workers...

EXT. TOWN OF MARYSVILLE -- DAY151

Montage: Houses are boarded up. People leave. The town is abandoned.

ANNE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In any case, the bank moved in and took over the business. Eventually, they gave up on Marysville...

INT. THOMAS MANSION, PARLOR -- DAY152

Sheets are put over the furniture. Hepzibah and the other staff prepare to leave.

CONTINUED:152

Louisa and Jeremiah scrutinize business documents, to which Louisa puts her signature.

ANNE (V.O.)

I couldn't understand what I'd done wrong. But it was clear that those people had no further use for me. Louisa's loyalty to my mother evaporated..

Young Anne stands silently in the doorway watching Louisa.

INT. THOMAS LUMBER MILL/DREAM -- NIGHT153

The Mill is engulfed in flames. Adult Anne is lost in the smoke and flames running, searching.

ANNE

Mrs. Thomas! Mrs. Thomas! I want to stay!!! Please let me stay!!

INT. THOMAS MANSION, SPARE ROOM -- NIGHT154

Young Anne wakes up and hears a noise. The room is in darkness. She goes to the stairs, hearing the front door. She looks out the window and sees Louisa and the children hurrying away in the night.

ANNE (V.O.)

The bank had taken everything and left her on the hook for all of the Thomas debt. Thinking back, I imagine Louisa spent the rest of her life running...

Young Anne picks up the Siamese cat and heads back to her room.

INT. ST. JOHN JAIL -- DAY155

Walter stands with his hands on the bars of a cell looking downtrodden.

ANNE (V.O.)

Despite what my father said in the letters he sent through Nellie, I soon realized that neither one of them had any desire to keep me.

EXT. NOVA SCOTIA SHORE ROAD -- DAY156

Nellie and Young Anne travel hastily along a road by the sea. The Siamese Cat is in her lap.

NELLIE

Open your hand. Look at the long life-line in that palm of yours.

CONTINUED:156

Young Anne examines the palm of her hand.

NELLIE (CONT'D)

I declare you'll become a great lady one day. Your open heart will allow you to float equally among everyone.

Young Anne looks up at Nellie wistfully. Nellie looks ahead avoiding Anne's pleading features. Young Anne hugs the cat.

NELLIE (CONT'D)

I'm no good for you. You need a family. You need to be bought up by hand... proper. The Hammonds are my friends. They'll keep you until your Pa lands on his feet. You'd be wise not to tell anyone he's behind bars.

YOUNG ANNE

I have so little prospect to finding kindred spirits in my life.

The words are like a lead weight in the girl's tender heart.

EXT. HAMMOND SAW MILL, NOVA SCOTIA -- DAY157

Young Anne and Nellie drive through a pine wood to a clearing. Nellie speaks to MR. HAMMOND, a rough taskmaster. She relates Anne's history, as the child stands clinging to her carpetbag. He motions her off to the Farmhouse, past the clearing.

ANNE (V.O.)

It was a lonesome place...

EXT. HAMMOND FARM, NOVA SCOTIA -- DAY158

Nellie walks Young Anne to the yard of an unpainted farmhouse in a pine wood. MRS. HAMMOND, a small shrewish woman with two sets of twins and several other youngsters running around, is feverishly hanging the laundry.

NELLIE

Hey, Pete. I got the girl I was telling you about.

PETER

Well, don't look at me. You gotta take her inside.

NELLIE

Hey, how you doing there?

MRS. HAMMOND

I'm alright, what's this?

Nellie stops the horse.

CONTINUED:158

NELLIE

Whoa. This is the girl I told you about.

MRS. HAMMOND

Alright.

NELLIE

Take a look at her.

MRS. HAMMOND

Well, she can help around the house. Come on, let's have a look at you.

NELLIE

She's a good worker.

MRS. HAMMOND

Alright, well get in there. Put your stuff in the house.

ANNE (V.O.)

I was a handy with children. And Mrs. Hammond had eight of them.

Nellie calls to her and introduces Young Anne. Mrs. Hammond acknowledges that Anne can help her and points to her take her bag inside. She refuses to take the Siamese Cat. Young Anne hands the Cat over to Nellie.

INT. HAMMOND CABIN -- DAY159

Young Anne fixes her things in a rough hewn room at the back of the house. She glances out the window to see Nellie disappear; with the cat. She is at a loss.

NELLIE

I want you to take this cat-

MRS. HAMMOND

Oh, no no no. Put it back. Just put that back. Good God, Almighty. I got youngin's. I can't be taking a cat like that...

NELLIE

Okay. See ya.

ANNE (V.O.)

I'm sure Mrs. Thomas's cat found better prospects than I have.

MRS. HAMMOND

Alright, I'll let you know if she works out...

Young Anne turns to a reflection in a discolored mirror, hung on a rusty nail.

CONTINUED:159

YOUNG ANNE

Katie, It's been awhile. At least we still have each other. If I hadn't lost myself in the beauty of Mrs. Thomas' world... but I so love beautiful things. I'm sure I couldn't live here if I hadn't an imagination.

Young Anne reaches out to kiss the fuzzy image of herself in the discolored glass. The image blurs in the dappled light reflecting through the trees onto the rough wall.

INT. GREEN GABLES -- NIGHT160

Anne writes her final letter to her dad.

ANNE (V.O.)

Dear Father, I appreciate the letters from your housekeeper, but I've yet to hear a reply from you. If you've changed your mind about wanting to communicate with me, at least let me know that. Sincerely, your loving daughter, Anne..

EXT. GREEN GABLES -- MORNING161

Anne opens the mail box. She finds letters from her daughters. A bill from Martha Gillis Real Estate, Rustico, and a letter from The Harding Funeral Home, St. John. Anne tears it open and quickly scans the content, whispering the funeral director's voice in her head.

MR. HARDING (V.O.)

I just received your address from your father's next of kin. He only just passed away in his 82nd year....

Anne holds the letter to her heart. She hurries inside.

INT. TRAIN CAR -- NIGHT162

Anne stares out the window of a train into darkness, an occasional flash of light strobes on her face illuminating her sadness. Anne stares into a void.

MR. HARDING (V.O.)

If you'd care to pay your respects, you may contact me at the above address. Your father was a man who was a pioneer in our community which enjoyed the results of his strong entrepreneurial efforts. You may or may not know he is pre-deceased by his wife Louisa..

INT. HARDING FUNERAL HOME -- DAY163

Mr. Harding has a number of documents on his desk. Anne sits in front of him looking drained.

MR. HARDING

Yet, a housekeeper looking in on him in the home he'd lived in for several decades. He was a chipper, good-looking fellow.

Anne nods. Mr. Harding passes her several documents. Anne flips through the will to find her father's signature.

MR. HARDING (CONT'D)

Sadly, the will was never updated. Of course, your father adopted Louisa Thomas' three children, Violetta, Jock, and Keith. Louisa and your father also had their own son. However, we've had no dealings with the man.

Anne is completely flabbergasted.

MR. HARDING (CONT'D)

When we informed the lawyer Mr. Sproule that we made contact with you, we received instructions that you be the person this way requested to determine as to the disposal of the remains...

Mr. Harding looks embarrassed. Anne doesn't know what to say. Mr. Harding gets up and leads her down the hall into a viewing room.

MR. HARDING (CONT'D)

The next of kin have requested that they wish to protect their privacy.

Anne looks bewildered and rejected. Harding shows her into a small back room. Anne enters fearful of the moment. She looks down into the pine coffin, trying to understand this moment, faced with the man who gave her life. Tears run down her face. She places her hand on her father's.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- DAY164

A small child of six with red hair reaches up to Walter's hand to grasp it. Walter gives Bertha a warm kiss on the cheek. She is carrying a valise of books. He puts his arm around her as they leave a schoolhouse. The young family walk down the road into the sunshine.

EXT. ST. JOHN LANE -- DAY165

Anne walks down the street checking the address on a scrap of paper. She stops at a house, where a HOUSEKEEPER is throwing out cartons and old furniture.

ANNE

Hello. Oh, I'm looking for 78 Old Fort Lane. It's Walter Shirley's home but I don't see any number here.

HOUSEKEEPER

And who would you be?

ANNE

I knew the family when I was young.

HOUSEKEEPER (CONT'D)

Well, help yourself to any of that junk if you want. I'm the new owner. I used to look in on him. We were great chums. The Wife died years ago.

ANNE

He...had a son.

HOUSEKEEPER

I never laid eyes on him. I dealt with a lawyer.

ANNE

Do you know how I can get in touch with this lawyer?

HOUSEKEEPER

Sure. I got it right here with the papers for the deed. Here we go.

The Housekeeper goes inside and fusses with a desk. Anne glances down at a book of poetry amongst the junk: "Alfred

Lord Tennyson - The Lady of Shallot" . Anne opens it and finds the inscription "Bertha Shirley, Bolingbroke 1888".

The sonsy Housekeeper quickly returns and hands Anne an address written on an envelope.

ANNE

Thanks so much. Do you mind if I keep this little old book.

HOUSEKEEPER

Oh, that belongs to you.

Anne smiles.

INT. ST. JOHN'S, LAWYER'S OFFICE -- DAY166

Anne enters a law office marked "Graham C. Sproule Solicitor, K.C." on a door, with a frosted glass pane. Anne approaches the SECRETARY.

ANNE

Hello. I wonder if I could speak with Mr. Sproule. I'm related to Mr. Shirley, who owned the house just sold on Old Fort Lane.

The Secretary remains distant and businesslike.

SECRETARY

I'm afraid that file is closed. We are no longer retained to act on behalf of Mr. Shirley.

ANNE

Well someone must act for his Estate. May I speak with Mr. Sproule?

SECRETARY

He's not here. He's in Boston on business and he won't be back for several weeks.

ANNE

Can you help me contact Mr. Shirley's son?

SECRETARY

We don't do Estate work.

The Secretary gets up to show Anne the door.

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

Actually, the executor of the will has ordered the file closed.

Anne decides to reveal herself out of desperation.

ANNE

I'm Walter Shirley's daughter. I'm looking for my half-brother. Walter's son. Can't you help me?! Please!

The Secretary literally forces Anne out and shuts the door.

SECRETARY

I'm sorry.

Anne is left standing alone in the hallway of the office building feeling like a desperate fool. Anne sets her jaw.

EXT. ST. JOHN, CITY HALL -- DAY167

Anne marches into the City archives.

INT. ST. JOHN, CITY HALL, ARCHIVES OFFICE -- DAY168

Anne pours down a ledger of wills on probate. She finds one labeled "Walter Shirley", with a sticker beside it. Anne takes the ledger to a CLERK.

ANNE

Excuse me. Could you please tell me, what this sticker means?

He examines the ledger.

CLERK

Oh.. that. The will's been probated. The funds have been settled and a receipt is waiting to be filed.

ANNE

Who are the beneficiaries?

CLERK

I'm sorry that's confidential ma'am.

ANNE

I need help. Walter Shirley was my father and I'm looking for a brother that I didn't even know I had.

Anne's lip trembles. The Clerk softens.

CLERK

I'm not supposed to do this.

He rifles through a file index. He checks the file number in the ledger again. In no time he draws the corresponding card and shows it to Anne.

CLERK (CONT'D)

Walter Shirley, Dependents. Violetta Phillips. Beneficiaries, Violetta Phillips. This would be the only beneficiary. Doesn't look like there's any son.

Anne looks at the card. It says, "Violetta Phillips, sole beneficiary of Louisa Thomas Shirley, 115 Cranston Street, Boston, Massachusetts".

ANNE

Everything went to Violetta Phillips, and no son?

The Clerk nods.

ANNE (CONT'D)

I appreciate your efforts.

CLERK

I'm sorry I couldn't be of more help.

Anne shakes her head. She leaves the Archives in a daze.

INT. PHILLIPS RESIDENCE, BOSTON -- DAY169

Anne elbows her way into the foyer of a house with the air of extravagance of Amelia's home in Marysville.

MAID

Mr. and Mrs. Phillips are not at home madame. Please will you leave your card.

ANNE

I'm a dear old friend of Violetta's. I just wanted to leave her a note... for her brothers. There's Jock, Keith and...oh dear...what's the other one? Oh dear. Do you have a pen, please?

HEPZIBAH

Who's there?

Anne glimpses an ancient Hepzibah coming down the stairs. Anne bursts past the Maid into the foyer.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Hepzibah! Dear Hepzibah! I thought we'd never see each other again. It's Anne! Anne Shirley!

Hepzibah stands her ground at the door, looking blank.

HEPZIBAH

We've never met.

ANNE (CONT'D)

As a child, I came with Louisa. We stayed with Mrs. Thomas. Hepzibah looks confused. Anne's face burns.

MAID

Robert!

DRIVER

What's the problem, Miss Hepzibah?

ANNE

You know exactly who I am. I need to speak to Violetta. My father has died and I need to know some things!

HEPZIBAH

You can write to Mr. Phillips at his downtown office. That would be best.

Hepzibah signals to the maid to hand Anne a card from a dish on a side table. Anne looks around and continues, hoping Violetta will come.

CONTINUED:169

ANNE

Someone didn't care enough about him to see to his burial. You can tell Violetta I don't give a damn about his estate or his money or anything-

A DRIVER arrives from the kitchen. Hepzibah looks daggers.

DRIVER

What business have you here ma'am?

ANNE

I have a brother that's my business! I have a brother. And I want Violetta Thomas to tell me where he is! That's the very least she could do...

The Driver politely escorts Anne by the arm.

DRIVER

There is no person by the name of Thomas that lives here...or Shirley. You must have the wrong address.

Hepzibah stands stone-faced. Anne rips up the card and drops the pieces on the floor. She turns on her heel and leaves.

EXT. CEMETERY -- DAY170

Anne lays flowers on a simple plot for her father, with a simple marker. She lays her hand on the ground.

EXT. GREEN GABLES, VERANDAH -- EVENING171

Gene is listening to the radio, doing a crossword puzzle.

He looks up and sees Anne dragging herself down the driveway. He hurries down the veranda stairs.

GENE

Hello there. Why did you leave a message at the hotel for me to come here? I could have picked you up at the station.

ANNE

I just wanted to be alone a little longer. I never got the chance to know him.

Gene picks up her luggage and they start to walk to the house.

GENE

You never needed Walter Shirley to be a part of your life.

ANNE

I never needed you to be a part of my life either. Now look at you.

EXT. GREEN GABLES, FIELDS -- DAY172

Anne and Gene walk through dappled sunlight of birch trees.

ANNE

I wonder if trees sleep... and if they do, if they dream?

Gene smiles at Anne's naivete. They come across the rolling fields, with the white farmhouse nestled into the trees.

GENE

So, how does it feel to be Anne of Green Gables, rather than Anne of nowhere in particular?

ANNE

Well. When I arrived, I knew it was home. Matthew and Marilla were everything to me.

EXT. GREEN GABLES, FRONT VERANDAH -- DAY173

Paper lanterns, tents and bunting are festooned everywhere as friends and neighbors gather for an extraordinary celebration. Anne's family are gathered around her on the verandah. RILLA and JAMES, and their four children; FRANNIE and TOM, and five year old ABIGAIL. Anne hugs baby TIMMY close to her.

FRIENDS from Avonlea and a number of Gene's ACTORS gather in the yard for the festivities.

LADY

Ready? Everybody, say cheese!

CROWD

Cheese!

MAN

That's great...got it.

Frannie runs after the children, scolding them.

FRANNIE

Hey, enough you two. Behave yourselves.

ANNE

Let them burn off steam Frannie!

FRANNIE

Alright, mother.

ANNE

Children should high spirits, and so they should - don't you think so Tom?

CONTINUED:174

TOM

Any occasion for her brother, Frannie wants to be perfect. And she always worries about Avonlea gossip.

ANNE

They can make as much racket as they want here.

Timmy pulls Anne's hair, wanting his father. Anne hands Timmy back to his father. She is getting anxious

ANNE (CONT'D)

Enjoy. They don't stay little very long.

Anne takes Gene's arm. They survey the crowd.

ANNE (CONT'D)

They're still not here yet.

GENE

Well, while we're waiting, why don't you introduce me to all the neighbors.

Anne takes a deep breath.

ANNE

Oh...Rilla! Darling! Can you make sure you and James start serving the drinks now?

RILLA

Alright Mom!

GENE

Who is that ancient pair over there that everyone is fussing over?

ANNE

Oh, that's Hetty King. And Rachel Lynde in the wheelchair.

Anne points to two old women surrounded by a throng of vivacious friends. Anne is preoccupied.

ANNE (CONT'D)

They're over ninety if they're a day. Rachel doesn't have any use for theatre people. So you shouldn't have to endure that.

Anne takes Gene in another direction.

GENE

Isn't that Fred and Diana. They look far too tanned and sophisticated to be from Avonlea...

CONTINUED: (2)174

DIANA blows Anne a kiss. FRED, minus an arm from the Great War is chatting with his children and neighbors. Diana is preoccupied with Elsie and John and their grandchildren. Diana fusses over Rachel.

ANNE

That's rather green-eyed of you. She's my best friend, and they've been hopelessly in love for the last forty years...

Suddenly she catches sight of three people coming down the road. Her face stops. She runs down the lane in pure rapture.

DOMINIC lets go of his girlfriend BRIGITTE'S hand. He has his arm in a sling. She carries a duffel bag for him. Behind them a YOUNG MAN, dressed in a business suit, shyly lags behind. Anne is out of breath.

DOMINIC

You knew I'd get here.

Anne looks horrified at his weakened left arm.

DOMINIC

I'm okay. Really Mom.

Anne softens. Brigitte takes her breath away.

ANNE

You're Brigitte.

BRIGITTE

(barely in English)

Oui, I'm pleased to make an acquaintance...

Anne hugs her and puts her arm around her.

ANNE

I can't wait to hear all about you and how you two met and I want to meet my friend Gene. Oh, this is overwhelming.

Anne takes both their hands and leads them to Gene, who comes forward hand extended.

BRIGITTE

Attend. Dominic...

She motions to the shy fellow, standing back at the end of the lane.

BRIGITTE (CONT'D)

Il faut que tu expliques maintenant.

CONTINUED: (3)174

DOMINIC

D'accord.

Anne looks at the shy fellow curiously.

DOMINIC (CONT'D)

That guy back there...he got off at the whistle-stop and asked the Station Master about directions to Green Gables.

Anne steps forward.

DOMINIC (CONT'D)

He just sort of followed us. He claims...he's your brother.

Anne turns to look at this awkward young man in his thirties, almost afraid to pass through the gate. Anne sees her entire life flash before her. She lets go of Dominic's hand.

She walks slowly to the gate. Dominic, Gene and Brigitte stand watching the tableau, unfolding like a pantomime.

Anne approaches the Young Man cautiously, curiously. He takes a step forward. Scant words are exchanged. Anne shakes his hand slowly, not letting go. She puts her hand to her mouth and shakes her head as he speaks to her, explaining the course that has finally brought them together.

Gene, Dominic and Brigitte are immobile, all afraid to break the spell.

Guests and family gather. People start to speak to Dominic and Brigitte and congratulate them. Many are looking curiously at Anne and the unusual visitor. Anne proceeds down the lane. She has difficulty speaking. She gives the Young Man her arm.

ANNE

This...this is my...brother...

Andrew.

GENE

I'm Gene. Please to meet you.

Andrew is brought forward to be introduced to Anne's entire family, grandchildren and neighbors. There is much shaking of hands. Warm greetings are extended to Andrew.

Dominic quietly turns to Gene. Their lack of familiarity with each other permits complete candor at this moment.

DOMINIC

Me, being an orphan, Mom always made it plain about wanting to do for me...

(MORE)

CONTINUED: (4)174

DOMINIC (CONT'D)

...what the Cuthberts had done for her. But I had no idea...

GENE

Neither did she. But life is extraordinary, and the great thing about it is that she is completely unaware of it.

EXT. AVONLEA CHURCH -- AFTERNOON 175

The doors to the white frame Church on the edge of town are thrown open. Dominic and Brigitte exit as newlyweds, submerged under a wave of confetti and rice being thrown at them by the throng of guests.

Through the crowd Gene backs up an elegant Packard, rigged with cans and 'Just Married' signs. He opens the back seat door for Dominic and Brigitte. Everyone cheers. Rilla and Frannie kiss Dominic and Brigitte. Guests are effusive in their well-wishing. Andrew turns to Dominic to shake his hand.

ANDREW

Your mother just told me how you were lost as a kid and when she found you, what a roller-coaster it was.

Dominic pats Andrew on the back.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

I feel the same about finding her.

Gene kisses the bride before stepping into the car. Anne kisses both her son and new daughter-in-law.

ANNE

I wish dad could have been here.

DOMINIC

He is, in spirit.

Anne waves to Dominic and Brigitte as they drive off.

Anne takes Andrew's hand, as she waves the newlyweds goodbye.

ANNE (V.O.)

Everything that has happened in my life...the good and the bad...is more than I could have ever made up.

EXT. AVONLEA-- DAY176

The car pulls away across the fields now rimmed with color as autumn breathes its first gust across the landscape.

EXT. GREEN GABLES, FRONT VERANDAH -- EVENING177

Anne writes in a notebook on the verandah. Gene kisses her cheek and walks away leaving her alone in silhouette.

ANNE (V.O.)

I do long to write and I'll write about all of it. My life has been unexpected. Exceptional, really.

Anne turns as the sun dips on the horizon.

ANNE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Eventually, the more love a person gives, the easier it is to find. It's the only part that matters. Nothing else. And it's so much nicer to be Anne of Green Gables, than to be Anne of nowhere in particular.

FADE OUT - END

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